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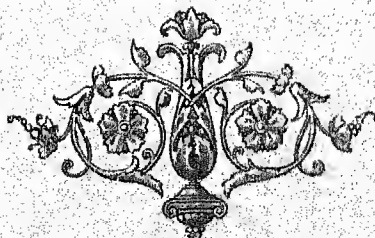
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DISEASE GERMS.

THE composition of the atmosphere has been regarded for years as a subject which chemists have long since decided with an exactness which can scarcely be improved upon. Text-books inform us that the air we breathe is in the main a mixture of the well-known gases oxygen and nitrogen, together with a small but uniform proportion of carbonic acid gas.

Such is, indeed, the composition of pure air; but life is so widely diffused over the globe that except in high Alpine regions, the atmosphere everywhere contains impurities of a more or less detrimental character. Our fires and lights pour into the air innumerable particles of solid carbon, and vapours of petroleum, creosote, and sulphurous acid. Our bakers send into it annually some millions of gallons of alcohol from the fermenting process connected with bread-making; dead and decaying animals and vegetables supply their quota of gaseous materials; while the industries which bring us much of our wealth, diffuse throughout the air numerous small particles of starch, wool, cotton, brickdust, arsenic, and other substances. But these impurities, considerable though they may appear, are really of minor importance. The winds and rains, which we vaguely speak of as 'clearing the air,' carry off most of the suspended particles and wash the soluble gases into the soil. There is another class of atmospheric impurities, however, so universal in their diffusion, and of such vast importance in their effects, that a thorough acquaintance with them will be fraught with incalculable benefit to mankind. These we are familiar with as the notes which dance in the sunbeams, the floating matters in the air, now known to consist, in part at least, of Disease Germs.

Nowadays, people are inclined to scoff at the aims of the old philosophers; but we ought to remember how much modern science owes to these early investigators. The astrologers may be held as mistaken in supposing any connection

to exist between the motions of a star and the life of a human being; yet we are indebted to them for a great deal of our earlier astronomical knowledge. The alchemists who spent their lives in the search for the philosopher's stone, and the mechanicians who devoted years to their quest of perpetual motion, did not spend their lives altogether in vain; for in many departments of chemistry and mechanics, we are now reaping the fruits of their labours. Hence, also, in more recent times the search after the beginnings of life—the dream of spontaneous generation—while fruitless in its direct endeavour, has already conferred upon us blessings great and manifold.

In 1837, Schwann, a Berlin scientist, made the important announcement, that when a decoction of meat is effectually screened from the atmosphere, putrefaction never sets in. Practically, the same principle is the secret of success in the modern trade of preserving meat in tin cans by exclusion of the air. Twenty-two years after Schwann's announcement, a book appeared from the pen of an eminent Frenchman, F. A. Pouchet, giving the results of numerous experiments altogether opposed to Schwann's conclusions. Deeply interested in the discussion, Pasteur, a young French chemist, determined to take the matter in hand, and commenced a series of experiments which have yielded the most interesting and valuable results. Starting with the air, he found that many of the floating particles are not mere specks of inanimate dust, but organised bodies containing the germs of life. Some of these he introduced into animal and vegetable infusions, which he had previously boiled, to destroy any living organisms which might be present in the liquid, the result being that he soon obtained an abundance of microscopic life, and in a short time the infusions invariably became putrid. On the other hand, when similar infusions were thoroughly protected from the entrance of these atmospheric particles, not the slightest indication of life appeared in the liquid, even after months and years; but when the smallest drop of any decomposing liquid was

added, or ordinary air obtained access to the clear infusions, life began to manifest itself, and soon the water teemed with myriads of microscopic organisms.

In this way Pasteur established the fact, that just as oaks grow from acorns, or thistles from thistle-seed, so these minute living organisms are produced according to the common law of generation, springing from previously existing germs or seeds, but never growing spontaneously, or giving the slightest indication that life ever proceeds from anything which has not itself owed its existence to some previous life. Since then, innumerable experiments conducted by our illustrious countryman Professor Tyndall, have fully corroborated Pasteur's researches.

Now, let us glance at several widely separated departments of every-day life, and investigate a few facts which have apparently but little connection with each other.

When milk is long exposed to the air, it becomes sour or putrid; and if we place a drop of sour milk under the microscope, we shall find a number of small organisms linked together like beads upon a string. These are the cause of the sourness; for they have decomposed the sugar of the milk into lactic acid, the substance which imparts the sour taste. The organism which produces this change is similar in nature and appearance to the well-known yeast-plant, which changes sugar into alcohol. Taking, now, a drop of putrid milk, we find it exhibits a different appearance from that which is simply sour; for it swarms with rapidly moving specks, which receive the common name of bacteria. These organisms are very minute, much smaller than those producing sourness, and they are in every case the active agents in producing putrefaction. Expose milk, or meat, or vegetables to the air, and in a short time they will swarm with bacteria. Keep the air from them, and not one of these organisms will be found.

Let us now turn our thoughts for a moment to France. About twenty years ago, a disastrous silkworm disease reduced the produce of cocoons from fifty-two million pounds in 1853 to eight million pounds in 1866, involving a loss of some hundred million francs. Examined under the microscope, the blood of the diseased silkworm was found to contain innumerable animated vibratory corpuscles; the silk-bag was filled with these, instead of with the clear material from which the silk is spun; and these organisms were present in still larger size in the mature moths. Starting with these facts, M. Pasteur attacked the problem, and by securing healthy eggs produced by healthy moths, and by carefully guarding against contagion, restored to France her valuable silk husbandry. But while the practical results he accomplished attest the accuracy of his views and predictions, the observations which led to these results are more immediately interesting. From moths untainted by disease he obtained healthy worms, and on these he conducted his experiments. Taking a diseased worm, and rubbing it up in water, he mixed a little with the food of healthy silkworms; the result being that all the latter became infected, and finally died. A single meal was sufficient to poison them, and the progress of the disease was always attended by

a gradual increase in the number of the above animalcular corpuscles found in their blood. During these investigations, M. Pasteur proved that the disease was spread by the worms scratching each other with their claws, and thus introducing the disease germs into the wound. He found too, that the refuse of diseased worms contained infectious organisms, and this adhering to the mulberry leaves, spread infection among other worms feeding on these leaves.

The same distinguished chemist had his attention drawn to the losses frequently sustained by the wine-growers and vinegar-makers of France. The wines would often become unaccountably acid or bitter, and millions of money were in this way lost to his countrymen. Setting to work in his usual thorough and scientific fashion, he soon discovered that the wine disease was due to the presence of numerous microscopic organisms on the skin of the grape, which, finding their way into the wine, set up putrefactive changes which entirely altered the character of the liquor. Having ascertained the cause, his next task was to find a remedy; and before long he made the discovery, that by simply heating the juice of the grape to a certain temperature, these putrefactive germs were all destroyed, without in any way damaging the quality of the wine. All three diseases, the wine, the vinegar, and the silk, he traced to their living causes; and eventually discovered remedies for each by determining the conditions which prove fatal to these organisms, or which prevent their development.

Passing now into the surgical ward of an English hospital, let us examine an amputated limb which is not healing well. It has begun to putrefy. Taking a little of the matter, we examine it under the microscope, and find it swarming with minute organisms similar to those which we observed in putrid milk. This wound has been exposed to the air. In the next room is a somewhat similar amputation, except that the wound was dressed in such a way as to prevent any of the so-called dust of the air from coming in contact with it. A spray of dilute carbolic acid was kept playing over it all the time it was being operated upon, and now it is healing beautifully, for no living germs have obtained access to it.

A word or two about an animal disease known as splenic fever will bring us to the well-known zymotic diseases which carry off so many human beings. As early as 1850 it was observed that the blood of animals which had died from splenic fever teemed with microscopic organisms resembling minute transparent rods; and it has been placed beyond all doubt that this fever is due to the growth and development of these minute organisms. Placed under favourable conditions, the rods grow till they often become a hundred times their original length. After a time, little dots appear in them, which finally grow to minute egg-shaped bodies, presenting an appearance somewhat like a long row of seeds in a pod. By-and-by the pod—as we may call it—goes to pieces, and the seeds or spores are let loose. Many experiments have been made with both rods and spores. Guinea-pigs, rabbits, and mice were inoculated with the blood of diseased animals containing the rods,

the result being that within twenty or thirty hours they invariably died of splenic fever. By drying the blood, which contained only the rods, it was found that it did not retain its infectious properties longer than about a month; but blood containing the developed spores, dried and reduced to dust, even after being kept four years, proved as deadly as at first.

In 1868, M. Chauveau made some interesting discoveries concerning the infectious matter in cow-pox, sheep-pox, small-pox, hydrophobia, glanders, and syphilis. Taking some of the matter, he found that it consisted of a fluid in which were numerous minute granular particles, some of them so minute as to pass through the finest filters. When diluted with water, the larger particles subsided, the finer granules, however, remaining suspended in the water, and the liquid still retaining its infectious properties; but by diffusion in distilled water, these minute particles were completely separated, and the liquid then proved harmless. It was thus shown that the infection was communicated by these minute organised particles, and that even a single one of these possesses such inconceivable fecundity that it will produce quite as powerful effects as if a large quantity of concentrated matter had been introduced into the system. Sufficient evidence has thus been obtained, to prove that many diseases are propagated by minute organisms; and it is now a well-ascertained fact that scarlatina, diphtheria, measles, typhus and typhoid fevers are spread in the same fashion.

Let us then briefly sum up what is at present known about the Germ Theory of disease. Experiments having shown that no life is known to spring from inanimate matter, we may reasonably conclude that just as wheat does not grow except from seed, so no disease occurs without some disease germ to produce it. Then, again, we may take it for certain that each disease is due to the development of a particular kind of germ. If we plant small-pox germs, we do not reap a crop of scarlatina or measles; but just as wheat springs from wheat, each disease has its own distinctive germs. Each comes from a parent stock, and has existed somewhere previously. It is true that complications occur, several diseases running their course at one time, or one after the other; but however uncommon, none of them are new. After a forest is cut down, a new variety of trees may spring up; but nobody supposes them to have grown spontaneously; the seeds existed there before, and their growth was due to the occurrence of conditions favourable to their development. So the disease germs which are always floating about may frequently be introduced into our bodies; but it is only when they meet with suitable conditions that they take root and produce disease. Under ordinary circumstances, these germs, though nearly always present, are comparatively few in number, and in an extremely dry and indurated state. Thus, they may frequently enter our bodies without meeting with the conditions essential to their growth; for experiments have shown that it is very difficult to moisten them, and till they are moistened they do not begin to develop. In a healthy system they remain inactive. But anything

tending to weaken or impair the bodily organs furnishes favourable conditions, and thus epidemics almost always originate and are most fatal in those quarters of our great cities where dirt, squalor, and foul air render sound health almost an impossibility. Thus, too, armies suddenly transferred from the regularity and comparative comfort of barrack-life to the dangers, toil, and exposure of the battlefield and the trenches, are often attacked by epidemics. Having once got a beginning, epidemics rapidly spread. The germs are then sent into the air in great numbers and in a moist state; and the probabilities of their entering, and of their establishing themselves even in healthy bodies, are vastly increased. For the same reasons, one disease not unfrequently follows another. The latter is commonly said to have 'changed' into the former; but probably the two are entirely distinct, the second being simply due to the weakening of the system.

Another widespread belief is that foul smells give rise to disease. It is not, strictly speaking, the foul gases, but the germs present in them, that produce the diseases. The effluvia, however, are themselves injurious to health, while they are indications of a state of matters much more dangerous; and it is never sufficient to destroy evil odours without searching out and removing the causes that produce them.

Climate and the weather have also much influence on the vitality of these germs. Cold is a preventive against some diseases, heat against others. But we have still much to learn regarding their behaviour under varying conditions. Tyndall found that sunlight greatly retarded and sometimes entirely prevented putrefaction; while dirt is always favourable to the growth and development of the germs. Sunshine and cleanliness are undoubtedly the best and cheapest preventives against disease.

The method in which these diseases are spread demonstrates the necessity and value of thorough disinfection. A person suffering from one of these zymotic diseases is affected, say, in the throat; well, every time he spits or coughs, or perhaps with every breath, he discharges from his throat a great number of the organisms whose development has produced the disease. These may pass directly into the body of some one near, and thus set up disease in a second person, and so on; or falling on the ground, or settling upon clothes or carpets, they may dry up like particles of dust, and be shaken off the clothes, perhaps many months after, or be carried by the wind to places at a considerable distance. In either case, still retaining all their virulence, they will give rise to a fresh outbreak of disease whenever they meet with favourable conditions. Thorough fumigation or other method of destroying their vitality, largely or entirely prevents this.

In the case of diseases such as typhoid, which attack the stomach, disease germs are removed along with the excreta; and if, as is often the case, the drainage of the town flows into a river, and that river is used in some after-portion of its course as the water supply of any town near its banks, there is great danger of disease being communicated by the water which we drink; for however well it may be purified and filtered, we have no

guarantee that it will contain none of these germs, which we have seen are so small that they pass through the finest filters. It is in this way that almost all the great cholera and typhoid epidemics have spread in London and other towns. That such a disgusting system should be permitted to exist, is a disgrace to a wealthy and enlightened nation.

How these organisms may be destroyed in cases of disease without injury to the person or animal affected, is the great problem which awaits solution. Wine-making, brewing, silkworm rearing, and surgery, have already shown the immense importance and practical value of a knowledge of this subject. Nowadays, in surgical operations every part of the flesh laid bare is washed with a dilute solution of carbolic acid, which effectually prevents the growth of these germs, and the consequent mortification which used to render amputation so frequently fatal. It is also known that consumption, which is probably a disease set up by some of these organisms, has in a measure been retarded, if not cured by inhalation of carbolic acid. Oxygen, we know, when in excess, proves a deadly poison to these organisms, and its entire absence is equally fatal; but the difficulty in adopting this remedy is that it might prove equally fatal to the person suffering from the disease. We know enough, however, about Disease Germs to show us in what direction future research may be most profitably engaged; and it is to be hoped that before long we shall obtain either a safe and unfailing remedy, or an efficient preventive against those diseases which, set up perhaps by a microscopic particle, eventually decimate continents, and thus afford us convincing evidence of the vast importance of so-called 'little things.'

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XXV.—'HE'S AN AWFULLY ODD FISH IS STRANGE.'

HAD Gerard known that Constance was going to London, he might perhaps have been more ready to accompany his father thither. But, as a matter of fact, the visit was unpremeditated. The maiden aunt in Chesterfield Street, Mayfair, had money, and was known to be kindly disposed to Constance. When, therefore, the old lady, learning from her brother that he was about to visit London, expressed a strong hope that he would bring Constance with him, Mr Jolly accepted the desire as a command. He was not unaware of the importance of money; and though Constance seemed already fairly provided for, it would still be unwise not to conciliate the maiden aunt, who was naturally anxious to learn at first-hand the details of her niece's engagement. And if Lucretia—that was the name of the maiden aunt—should express any intentions with respect to her testamentary dispositions, Mr Jolly was quite persuaded that at such a juncture nothing could be more natural. It was not diffi-

cult to persuade Constance; for, to tell the truth, she was beginning to find the social atmosphere of the Grange a little stifling. Her father's dull pomposities and shallow aphorisms were insufferably tedious. There are a good many dull and pompous fathers in the world, whose daughters, aided by Love, revere and admire them. Constance was unhappily without Love's aid, and her father wearied her exactly as any other prosy person would have done. In his inmost soul, Mr Jolly had an idea that his style was Disraelian. He was Conservative in politics, and modelled himself naturally on the lines of his party chief. But it is not everybody who can fight in Saul's armour, and the Disraelian style, handled by Mr Jolly, was a cruel thing to suffer under. Reginald found it endurable, because it awakened his own sense of humour. He saw the fun of it; but Constance, who, like many charming women, had but a limited perception of fun, saw and felt only its dreariness. The house itself was somewhat dull after that fever of festivity into which Mr Jolly had for a time plunged it, and she was willing to welcome any reasonable pretence which called her away from it. These two were the reasons which she admitted to herself; but there was another which had more weight than both of them, although she was reluctant to own it—she was weary of Gerard.

Admiration is a pleasant thing to endure, but the signs of it may be so presented as to grow tedious. Gerard had no small talk, and his icy divinity froze him. He was not happy in her presence; but his dreams of her presence made him happy. There was not the faintest doubt in his mind that when once they were married they would live a life of pattern felicity. The old truth which it was Pope's good fortune to crystallise for English-speaking people, operated here as elsewhere:

Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be blest.

The future was roseate; the present, misty. Always that wonderful glamour, which perhaps alone makes life worth living, lay about to-morrow, but never about to-day.

Whether it were an old device or a new one, I cannot say, but I remember that in the year 1865 I witnessed an acted morality or mystery, the memory of which has remained with me. The scene was the cavalry barracks at Cahir, in County Tipperary—the occasion, the annual regimental sports of the Fourth Royal Irish Dragoon Guards. When the sword-exercise and foil-play and boxing, the running, walking, leaping, and vaulting matches were over—when the men had raced behind wheelbarrows and jumped in sacks, and the tug-of-war was lost and won, there came, to crown the festival, a donkey-race. Private Paddy Byrne, a regimental unit attached to the F Troop—this is not fiction, but history, and when, O when, did it cross Paddy's mind that an old comrade would put him in a novel?—with a wonderful laughable Irish grin on the Hibernian face of him, perched himself an inch or two forward of his donkey's tail, and laid between the moke's ears a switch,

on the end whereof swung two inviting carrots and a clean white turnip. Away went the donkey in pursuit of these tit-bits, never more than a stride's length from his watering teeth, yet never attainable. Every stride deceived him; but Hope sprang eternal in the asinine bosom, and he still pursued. I was young and thoughtless in those days, and at this acted mystery I laughed unthinkingly. But in the years which have gone since then, I know now that not a day has passed in which I have not with equal wisdom raced after something no more worth having and no more attainable, and Paddy Byrne's donkey has with me risen to the dignity of a moral *mythus*, preaching eternal truths. And he typifies, indeed, not me alone, but a whole hungry foolish world, tearing headlong in pursuit of that sweet and dear to-morrow which it never reaches. With the rest of the world, let him typify this poor hungry-hearted Gerard. 'If I laugh,' wrote the saddest satirist that ever put pen to paper, 'tis that I may not weep.' One may as well put things cheerfully as sorrowfully. You may suck marrow of mirth, and grow as wise as by sipping the salt of tears—if you are a born angel, and a saint by nature.

Mr Jolly apprised Constance, in the afternoon, of her aunt's desire; and it was decided that they should all three go to town together on the following day. Gerard came in the evening as usual; but she allowed him to ride away without telling him of the arrangement made. An hour before starting, she sent him a brief note, saying that her aunt desired to see her, and that she was going to London, but of design aforesaid, forgot to give her lover her town address. She remedied this omission a day or two later, when she had secured a little quiet, and had discovered that it is better to be bored by admiration than not to be admired at all. To her amazement, Gerard did not fly to her when she lifted her finger. A day or two passed, and she did not hear from him. Matters grew a little wonderful, and even a little alarming. We have seen already that Val Strange made a call upon her. Familiar as Val contrived to seem in Reginald's eyes, this was his first visit; but he and Miss Lucretia were known to each other beforehand, and Val was a reminder to the old lady of her one romance. These renewals of youth are singular. Val's father was the only one among many admirers for whom Miss Lucretia in her youth had cared; but with that perversity which is a part of love, they had quarrelled over some trifle or other no bigger than a mote in a sunbeam, and had so parted—the man to forget as men forget, the woman to remember as women remember. Of this the young fellow knew nothing. Had he known, he might have sought the sympathy and intervention of the old lady, and have besought her to implore Constance to break off a loveless engagement. It is hard to say whether such a course could or could not have been justified, though there is little doubt that Val would have been able to justify it to himself. But he was ignorant of the tie between himself and the old maid, and knew nothing of the affection with which she regarded him. Had he known, the course of this story might have been altered; but then, there is nothing so slight in life that it might not alter the course of any human tragedy or comedy. And now Val was gone from Con-

stance's little circle, and still no Gerard came. The absence of one, and the silence of the other, became remarkable, before Reginald came to explain one of the phenomena, and a shock which was in its way a sort of social earthquake, came to explain the second. Reginald lounged in a day or two after Val's departure, and found his sister alone. Some conversational preliminaries being gone through which had but little interest for either of them, Reginald said casually: 'I say, Con., did Strange tell you he was going to the West Indies?'

'No,' said Constance, bending closer over her embroidery. 'When is he going?' She tried to make the question sound commonplace and disinterested, but read failure in her own tones.

'Oh,' said Reginald, ensconcing himself for more safety behind his eyeglass, and watching her keenly, 'he's gone. Started yesterday.'

Constance, with a great effort, retained composure. 'Why did he go?' she asked. 'Had he business there—property there?'

'Oh,' said the wary youth, 'you never know where to have Strange. You'd think he was dead-set on something or other, and meant to spend his life at it, and in half an hour he's dead-set on something else. As I told him the other day, he's like Dryden's Duke of Buckingham, "Everything by turns, and nothing long." You never know what he'll do next.'

Women are much better actresses than men are actors, and when Constance spoke, her nonchalance might have puzzled a less careful observer. She held her embroidery a little from her in both hands, turned her beautiful head this way and that, regarding it; and then, slowly raising her violet eyes, she dropped one negligent word: 'Indeed?' But she had not calculated that Reginald suspected, and was watching, and so she overdid it by a trifle, and seemed to his keen vision supernaturally indifferent.

'Yes,' murmured the watcher, fixing his eyeglass with a facial contortion which laid the ghost of expression still lingering, 'he's an awfully odd fish is Strange. You really never know where to have him.' He was modest enough to distrust his own powers, and he stopped short there, having done enough, as he conceived, for one day. His finesse was well meant, and for the moment it was satisfactory.

'So,' said Constance to herself, 'he has run away to avoid me.' Her heart sank at this desertion. She had forbidden Strange ever to speak again on the topic he had once broached to her; but she had not forbidden him her presence, and indeed had not the strength of heart so to deny him or herself. She pitied him—it was sweet to pity him. Before she had heard his confession, she had gone the usual maiden path to love, and had not known to what goal it led her. She found his society pleasant, more pleasant than that of any man she had ever encountered—so much, she was aware of. She knew that her society was pleasing to him; but for so beautiful a woman, she was amazingly devoid of vanity, and no thought of his being in love with her crossed her mind. For that matter, her engagement to Gerard seemed to hem her about with a sort of Society sacredness—men did not fall in love with young ladies who were engaged to be married. And when at last Strange's wild

declaration was made, her own heart answered it with a voice which there was no chance of mistaking. Here at last was the man who held the key to her heart, out of all the scores who had come a-wooing, and he came too late. It might have seemed easy enough to do the only thing which under the circumstances was wise and honourable—namely, to send Gerard his dismissal and to tell him that a union between them could lead only to unhappiness. But the wise and right thing to do is not always that which presents itself most attractively, and she had no one to advise and help her. That Gerard would have freed her, had she appealed to him, though he broke his heart in doing it, went of course without saying. But then, there was the natural disinclination to so pronounced an action, the natural fear of his silent reproach, the natural dread of the county talk. It would be bitter to be called a jilt; and there was no reason or shadow of a reason, except the true one, which she could assign against her engagement to Gerard. So, like wiser people, she decided to let things take their course for a time, with a vague hope that something might come to pass which would unravel the tangled skein and lay it out straight and smooth once more. And her reluctance to pain Gerard had more ground than a natural tenderness of disposition which is happily common to most women. She respected him, and in her secret heart was sensitively afraid of his ill opinion. Notwithstanding the general chilliness of their courtship, they might have made a very happy married pair, but for the advent of Val Strange. It is only in novels that husband and wife are kept apart by those thread-like filaments of feeling of which a certain school of feminine romancists are so prodigal. The plain English of that matter is, that unless a man is absolutely distasteful, or the woman's mind is preoccupied, marriage is the shortest way to love, and the surest.

SNAKE-ANECDOTES.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

To the generality of people the very word snake conveys a shuddering impression. The animals themselves are regarded with wholesale aversion. Nor is this altogether to be wondered at when we consider the terrible effects produced by the bite of many species—the mortal effects produced by a certain section of the tribe. There are, however, some folks who, so far from entertaining any aversion to those creatures, are anxiously engaged in studying their ways, their mode of life, and happily the dreaded powers with which the poisonous species—one-fifth only of the entire race—are endowed. In Great Britain, one species only, the adder, is poisonous, though not to the extent of being deadly poisonous; but the case is different in countries such as India and South America, where there are snakes from whose bite there is no hope of recovery. Happily, these death-dealing creatures are few compared to their more innocent brethren, though in India the fatalities which are yearly reported are still as appalling as ever. With a view to providing a remedy for the bite of what are termed deadly

snakes, many experiments have been, and still continue to be made; but as yet we have heard of no certain cure. One of our greatest authorities, Dr Fayer, is obliged to admit that there is no hope for the person who has been bitten by a cobra whose poison is fully secreted and delivered.

Our contributor Dr Arthur Stradling, late of the Royal Mail (Marine) Service, who favours us with the following interesting anecdotes, has made a lifelong study of the habits of snakes, both poisonous and non-poisonous. He has, we believe, made many experiments with the hope of mitigating the dire results accruing from snake-bites, and has even gone the length of voluntarily permitting various poisonous species to exercise their fangs upon his own person! Taking certain precautions beforehand—the nature of which Dr Stradling has not yet made public—he has risked his life in the endeavour to counteract the baleful effects of snake-poison. If in the end he may be enabled to prescribe an antidote that shall prove effectual in staying the effects of the dreaded virus, mankind will owe him a debt of gratitude akin to that which it has paid to the discoverer of vaccination.

With this prelude, we offer to our readers a few of the Doctor's snake-stories. He writes as follows:

For the truth of the following anecdotes, in which serpents play a part more or less prominent, I can vouch; the incidents—except the first—having all occurred within my own personal experience. The exception, however, is matter of history at the Zoological Gardens; and not only were the eye-witnesses of the occurrence—among whom were Mr Bartlett and the late Mr Frank Buckland—well known to me—my informants, indeed—but the snake itself afterwards became a great friend of mine.

A few years ago, an immense anaconda or water-bon was received at the Gardens in Regent's Park, brought in a barrel on board a steamer from Central America to Liverpool, and forwarded thence by rail. This reptile, as perhaps my readers are aware, is the largest of the serpent tribe, inhabiting the swamps of Tropical America, and sometimes attaining a length of thirty or forty feet, it may be much more. It is one of the Constrictors—that is to say, it is non-venomous, and kills its prey, like the boa and python, by crushing it within the convolutions of its powerful body. In the British Museum there is a fine stuffed specimen, about thirty feet long, represented in the act of seizing, though not constricting, a peccary. The subject of my tale measured twenty-three feet in length, and in girth was equal to the circumference of a man's thigh—a formidable customer, capable of swallowing a sheep. Prepared for his reception, with the floor duly gravelled, and a tank with water, Den No. 3, on the left-hand side of the reptile-house, counting from the entrance-door, was allotted to him; and within the cage is a stunted tree, up which these large serpents are wont to climb. The top of the cask unscrewed, the creature was allowed to find his way into the cage through the small aperture behind.

Roaming about in the full enjoyment of his new-found liberty, he presently turned round between the tree and the front of the cage

—a space of several feet—in such a way that the bight of his body—to use a seafaring expression—lay within this space. Here, feeling the contact of the glass on one side and the wood on the other, he suddenly expanded his coil, probably in the sheer luxury of being able to stretch himself, and pushed the front of the cage out! Not simply the glass itself, which was not broken, but the heavy framework in which it is fixed, was forced away from its connection with the surrounding beams. Hereupon, several of the spectators had the presence of mind to rush forward and catch the sash before it could fall to the floor. In this way they supported it as well as they could with hands and knees until fresh assistance arrived, for the weight was too great for them to lift it back into position again; while the reptile inside, excited by the shouting and commotion, was dashing about furiously in all directions. This scattered the gravel about; and it was then found impossible to return the frame into its proper place, as the groove was choked with the small stones. Mr Frank Buckland, aided now by a number of men from all parts of the Gardens, still kept the glass from descending, while the keeper and carpenter, who got into the cage from behind, having thrown some blankets over the snake and pushed him into a corner, proceeded to scrape away the gravel. But the anaconda, now thoroughly enraged, contrived to extricate his head from the covering, and before the men could escape, flew at the carpenter and seized him by the shoulder. The keeper courageously turned, gripped the serpent by the throat, and forced him to let go, but not until the unfortunate man's arm was terribly lacerated by the powerful lancet-like teeth.

Luckily, the door of the reptile-house had been locked when the first *contretemps* took place, so that no casual visitors were witnesses of the scene; otherwise, fainting women and horror-stricken men would doubtless have added to its confusion. By this time the groove was clear, and the frame temporarily secured, so that the carpenter made good his exit, while the keeper, watching his opportunity, flung the creature from him and jumped out.

But it afterwards became very tame and tractable, and I established very friendly relations with it. Many a time have I stood at the door with Holland the keeper, and allowed it to rear its great black-spotted head out of the tank till it flickered its tongue against my face, while I patted its shining scales with my hand. Towards Holland it was most affectionate, and would always come up to the grated ventilator to see him when he was sweeping out the passage behind, though it took no notice of the people in front. Snakes take strong likings and dislikes to people, often unaccountably. Holland was one of the kindest and most intelligent keepers that ever handled a reptile, and could generally win any thing's confidence; yet there was—and probably is still—a West African python, some sixteen feet long, in the house, that positively conceived a murderous hatred of him. Why this should be so, neither he nor any one else could ever understand; but it is a fact that this python at feeding-times would sit up close to the door and wait, not for the ducks and rabbits, but for him!

The anaconda to which we have just referred was eventually killed by a guinea-pig! The little animal had been put into the den for a smaller snake's delectation, as our friend was torpid just then, owing to the approaching casting of the skin, in which state they do not feed. The guinea-pig was running carelessly over him, and the irritation of its feet probably caused the anaconda to move slightly, for its leg became entangled between two folds of the serpent's body—not constricted or nipped in anger, in which case it would have been all up with guinea-pig in a very short time—and it could not get free. It must probably have struggled some time, and then bitten its unconscious captor till it got away, for a great hole was found in the snake's side, and it lost much blood. This caused such profuse suppuration and ulceration of the whole body, that the poor brute had to be destroyed.

I have succeeded in bringing alive to this country two specimens of that deadliest of serpents, the Brazilian curucucu, or bush-master as it is called in Guiana; and in connection with the first of these I had a disagreeable little adventure. It was sent to me in Rio de Janeiro in an open bowl-shaped basket, having been caught with a lasso, which, drawn tight behind its large triangular head, and passed through the wicker-work, secured it to the bottom of the basket. Evidently, it could not go home like this. I had no snake-tongs, and was not at that time quite so confident about manipulating poisonous serpents as closer familiarity with them has since made me; besides, a cabin on board ship contains so many nooks and crannies wherein a snake, once escaped from control, would be wholly irrecoverable. Therefore, I covered the mouth of the basket with canvas in such a way as to convert it into a sort of kettledrum; and cut a square hole in this, which corresponded exactly, when the drum was turned upside down, to an aperture in a snake-box, made by removing the perforated zinc. Then, applying the two accurately together, I cut the noose from the outside, in the hope that the reptile would drop through into the box. This, however, he refused to do, but darted round and round inside the basket, striking passionately; and as the wicker was neither very thick nor close in texture, it may be imagined that the situation was rather a sensational one. I had commenced operations just as we were steaming out of the Bay of Rio; and while affairs stood in the position I have indicated, we crossed the bar. The heavy swell from the outside caught the ship right abeam, and caused her to give two or three of the most tremendous lurches I ever experienced. I thought for the moment that she was going over. Everything in my cabin went adrift; books, boxes, cages, chairs, and about a dozen other snakes, came tumbling about me with a deafening din of smashing glass and woodwork. I lost my footing, and was thrown down; and as the ship rolled back to the weather-side, a huge wave thundered in at the open port and flooded the cabin; but I clung to my basket and box all the time, holding them together literally for dear life; for I knew I might as well be drowned or get my brains knocked out, as let my prisoner escape. He was safely housed at last; but a filament of the grass

lasso remained around his neck, spite of all my attempts to disengage it; this interfered with his respiration, and he died shortly after his arrival at the Zoo.

Having brought home many scores, perhaps hundreds, of live snakes in the course of my voyages, I have at different times published the results of my experience in that line, in the hope of inducing others to do the same. In the study of ophiology, living specimens are a great desideratum, since, after death and in spirits, snakes alter so much as to be scarcely recognisable, especially when injured, as they usually are. Nothing is more easily or safely kept during a voyage than a snake, if attention be paid to one or two small details. It is more easily kept than a bird, as it requires neither food, water, light, nor abundant ventilation; and beyond warmth, needs scarcely more care than a dead one in a bottle; but I suppose it is because these small details are so little known that we get so few rare snakes at the Zoo. In my papers, I have endeavoured to point out not only all that is necessary for their well-being in transmission, but also the dangers connected with them to be avoided on board ship. Nevertheless, an incident happened to one of mine some time ago, the possibility of which had never entered my head. I say to 'one of mine;' but in reality the reptile, a fine full-grown rattlesnake, did not belong to me, but to a brother-officer, who had bought it for presentation to the Zoological Garden at Hamburg, on the strength of my promise to look after it for him. It was brought on board in a small square box—a Schiedam-case, in fact—neatly tied up in brown paper, at my suggestion, and labelled 'Feather Flowers,' for the benefit of inquisitive passengers. This box was fronted with galvanised wire-netting of small mesh, which must have been nailed on after the snake had been put in, as there was no door. All was perfectly secure; so, as I had a numerous serpent tenantry at the time in my own specially constructed cases, I decided to let my lodger remain where it was, more especially as I judged, from its plump appearance, that it had lately fed, and would require no more nourishment till it got home. (It is worthy of remark that, as a rule, snakes feed, or require to be fed, only at long intervals; a rattlesnake has been known to live a year and eleven months without food.)

Imagine my surprise when, on going to my cabin about a week later, I met a little rattlesnake, six or seven inches long, climbing over the combing of the doorway! There was no doubt about it; *Crotalus horridus** was written in every scale of his wicked little head and diamond-patterned back, and signed by the horn at the end of his tail, which went quivering upwards as soon as he saw me. It was not a time to stand on ceremony, so I stood on him instead. Inside the cabin was another, wriggling along the floor, on whom also I executed a *pas seul* without further inquiry; and on turning round, sure enough there was a third on the washing-stand, sticking up his head and tail with the most menacing intentions. There was no longer any doubt that an interesting event had happened, a fact which was evidenced by the spectacle of

the box swarming with writhing little corkscrews, one of which was in the very act of escaping through the wire. I snatched up a towel and pressed it over the case; and while my boy nailed it on, and thus blinded the front, I despatched the two strays.

Now came the question, What was to be done? The inmates were safe enough for the time; but it obviously would not do to trust to a thin towel as the only dividing medium between them and the ship at large, for the rest of the voyage. I had to be cautious then, not being in possession of the means which place me now to a great extent beyond the pale of danger, and allow me to handle these things with comparative impunity; but I was none the less anxious to save the brood. A woman happily extricated me from my dilemma—the old stewardess, who was quite in my confidence, since she 'didn't mind them things,' and who used to allay any anxiety on the subject among lady-passengers with, I fear, a greater regard for me than for the truth. She gave me an old stocking; and this is what we did with it. First, we removed all the nails from one corner at the back of the box for about two inches along the two sides of the angle, and fixed a screw instead at the extreme angle itself. Then, with an excision saw—out of my case of surgical instruments—we cut through the wood for two inches each way, so as to complete the square, then nailed the mouth of the stocking over it, and finally removed the screw with a small screw-driver through a tiny slit in the stocking itself. The piece of wood, two inches square, thus severed all connection, and the screw dropped down into the foot; and by dint of shaking and knocking, the little reptiles were induced to follow. When a good many were in, the stocking was tied with cord tightly near the heel, and again about an inch higher, and the lower part was cut off between the two ligatures. This was emptied of its contents into a glass box which stood ready for their reception, while the rest of the babies were shaken down into the leg of the stocking, which still remained a *cul de sac*. The only hitch in the proceedings was a momentary though rather serious one, caused by mamma protruding her head and evincing a disposition to follow her offspring. When all the little ones—there were thirteen of them, exclusive of those I had killed—were out of the box, the bag was again tied twice, and divided; and they were restored to the society of their brothers and sisters.

But stop a bit! The resources of our very subtle contrivance were not yet exhausted. About a foot-length of that most useful stocking was still left, and this was tied once more, but this time close up to the box; then the lower end was untied, two rats introduced and fastened up again; then, the upper ligature being removed, the rats were shaken into the cage, and the maternal rattlesnake was compensated for the loss of her promising family by a good dinner. Finally, the stocking—or what was left of it—was pushed into the box, and the square piece of wood was nailed securely on again over it. But there was a pleasing uncertainty for the remainder of the voyage as to how many had got adrift before I discovered them, and where they had

* The Latin name for the rattlesnake.

stowed themselves, which rendered going to bed, putting on one's boots and the like, full of interest. When the importation of rattlesnakes becomes a recognised branch of industry, I shall take out a patent for that stocking dodge.

THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THERE was an unusual stir and bustle in the old-fashioned and generally dull town of Honfleur, opposite the port of Havre, in France. The old weather-worn, worn-eaten, wooden wharfs and jetties were thronged with fisherwomen and girls, all clad in their gala attire, whose number increased as they were joined by fresh arrivals from the neighbouring sea-coast, many having come from distant villages and hamlets. There was such eager, lively, and continuous chattering, that a stranger might have imagined there had occurred a second confusion of tongues—confined on this occasion to the gentler sex. The eyes of all present were directed seawards, and from time to time, some one would mount one of the wooden piles to which small vessels that frequented the harbour were moored, and, pointing to a speck on the water, visible in the far distance, would cry: 'Ils viennent! Ils viennent! Je les vois!' (They come! They come! I see them!) And for a few moments the clamour of voices would be hushed, only to break forth again with expressions of disappointment; for these fisherwomen and girls had assembled to greet the return of husbands, brothers, sons, and lovers who had been long absent, engaged in the cod-fishery in the stormy North Sea.

For many weeks past, the weather had been tempestuous; and those who had friends and relations at sea—and these comprised almost every inhabitant of the town and the neighbouring sea-coast—had passed many a sleepless night, listening to the fierce gusts of wind that swept around their humble and often exposed dwellings; or had started out of a troubled slumber to breathe a short but earnest prayer for the safety of the absent ones; for there had come from time to time sad stories of fishing-vessels that had foundered at sea with all hands; and all who heard these dismal stories dreaded lest the lost vessels might be those which had sailed a few months before with their dearest relations and friends on board.

On the previous night, however, a steam-packet had arrived at Honfleur, and her captain had reported the glad tidings that he had that day passed the homeward-bound Honfleur fishing-fleet off Dieppe, all safe, and that, as the wind was favourable, the vessels might be expected to arrive in port the next morning. Hence the vast and eager concourse of fisherwomen from the town and the adjacent coast.

At length there was a general hush. A speck that to a landsman would have appeared like a bird hovering over the water, was discerned in the far distance; then another, and yet another became visible. There was no longer any doubt that the fleet was approaching. Nearer and nearer the vessels drew; the cut of their sails

could be discerned; then their low black hulls appeared, and the experienced eyes of the fisherwomen recognised the vessels in which their husbands, lovers, and sons had sailed. The women counted the approaching luggers. Not one vessel of the little fleet was missing. But it yet remained to be seen whether all the crews had returned safe and well; and the hearts of the anxious watchers beat quickly, with hopes, doubts, and fears commingled.

Another weary hour passed away, and the vessels were off the port. Then arose from them a cheer which brought relief to the anxious women. Well they knew its meaning. It announced, that all who had sailed with the fleet had returned safe and well. The cheer was answered with a general shrill cry of joy. The vessels entered the harbour and ranged up alongside the wharf; and amidst cries of welcome, bursts of hysteric laughter, and tears of joy and gladness, the hardy, weather-beaten fishermen leaped on shore to greet their impatient loved ones. It was a strange yet pleasing sight to see these stalwart, weather-browned, whiskered and bearded seamen, clad in their coarse pilot jackets, tarry petticoat-trousers, heavy sea-boots, and oilskin sou'-wester caps—their garments still damp, and glistening with the spray which had fallen in showers over the vessels' decks, even to the moment when they entered the sheltered harbour—clasped in the loving embraces of the women and girls the instant their feet touched the wharf. The elder women, though brown and wrinkled, were yet robust and healthy; the young women and girls fresh and comely, with pleasant pretty faces, fair complexions, blue eyes, and glossy brown hair. All alike, old and young, were neatly and smartly attired in their picturesque fisherwomen's costume, with high, wide-frilled caps, white as snow, short, full petticoats, creaseless blue or gray stockings, and neat buckled shoes, which set off their well-formed lower limbs to great advantage; while many of them wore large earrings of real gold, handed down as heirlooms from grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

Amongst the first to leave their craft was a tall, handsome, young man, with laughing blue eyes, and curly, dark-brown hair, who leaped to the wharf into the extended arms of a pretty girl, apparently not more than eighteen years of age, who, as she embraced her lover, seemed perfectly regardless of the surrounding crowd.

'Welcome—welcome home, my Antoine!' cried the girl as she kissed her lover's whiskered cheek. 'Ah, how I have prayed and sighed for thy return! The storms have been so severe; and we heard such bad news that my heart was troubled. But the blessed Madonna hearkened to my prayers, and again I behold thee safe and well. The sight repays me for all my sufferings.'

The youthful pair released each other, and forcing a passage through the thick of the crowd, strolled away side by side in the direction of their native village, each with an arm twined round the other's waist. There was silence for a few minutes. Both were happy with their own thoughts.

Madeline at length broke the silence. 'Thou hast not told me about thy voyage, Antoine. Has it been successful?'

'Successful as I could desire, my Madeleine,' replied the young man. 'If the gales have sometimes blown fiercely, it is what we fishermen must look for; and we care little for the weather if other things favour us. The good St Antoine [St Anthony is regarded by the French fishermen as their patron saint] has watched over us, and guided our vessels safe home.—And now, hearken, Madeleine! Tell me, dearest, is it not time that we possessed a lugger of our own?' glancing over his shoulder towards the vessel he had just quitted, whose masts could be seen amidst those of the other craft in the port. 'Will not the gains of this voyage make up the necessary amount, Madeleine?'

It is customary among the fishermen of the northern and western coasts of France, on their betrothal—which usually takes place at an early age—to some young maiden of their class, to place their wages at the end of each voyage in the hands of their *fiancées*, for safe keeping, reserving only what is sufficient for their necessary expenditure, and for the renewal of their outfits before they sail again, with perhaps a trifle beyond this amount, to pay for their small indulgences and harmless recreations. The young women having attended school when children, are generally possessed of some little education; while the boys go to sea with their relatives or friends as soon as they are of the slightest service on ship-board. Thus, few among the latter know how to read or write. It is customary also with the young women, after betrothal, to stipulate with their lover, that, previous to their marriage, some object for their mutual benefit shall be attained, such as the purchase of a fishing-lugger, or a share in such a vessel, or at least the means of purchasing the needful furniture, &c., for a humble household—according to their position.

Antoine and Madeleine belonged to what may be termed the superior class of fisher-folk. Both had been left orphans at an early age, and each had inherited a few thousand francs on the death of their parents. This money had been carefully set aside—but not in a bank. The French fisher-folk, in the days of which we write, had no faith in banks, and preferred to keep their savings where they might be secure, and ready to hand when required. To these joint bequests, Antoine's wages, and Madeleine's earnings from knitting and fancy-netting in her leisure hours, had been added from time to time, until, when Antoine sailed on his last voyage, but a small addition to the savings already accumulated was needed for the accomplishment of the desired object.

Madeleine—although she had been firm in her resolve not to wed her lover until the object of their mutual ambition was secured—was no coquette. 'It is now three years ago, my Antoine,' she replied to her lover's question, 'since we betrothed ourselves to each other in the chapel of Our Lady of Lorette. I was then but sixteen, you were nineteen years of age. I shall be twenty years old on my next birthday, three weeks hence. We have more than sufficient, Antoine, for the purchase of a lugger with everything on board complete, without counting thy profits on this last voyage. My poor old uncle, Pierre le Blanc, died soon after you sailed the last

time, and he left me a handsome legacy. The profits of your last voyage will be so much extra, which we can lay by, or expend on furniture and such other things as may be necessary. Perhaps, Antoine, if thou wilt, my approaching birthday may be our wedding-day?'

It is needless to state that the young fisherman was more than willing that the wedding should take place at the time mentioned by his *fiancée*. In due course the banns were published in the little village church, and on the anniversary of her birthday, Madeleine Letour and Antoine Duroc were united.

A new fishing-lugger, with masts and spars and sails and rigging all complete, was purchased; and Antoine remained at home for some months after his marriage, leisurely preparing his vessel for sea, but chiefly passing his time with his young wife. Occasionally, with the object of testing the qualities of the new vessel, which was called *The Madeleine*, the young fellow sailed for a day's fishing along the coast; but, for the first time since he was old enough to go to sea, the Honfleur fleet of luggers sailed for the far distant cod-fishery without him.

It has been hinted that when the meeting took place between the returned fishermen and their wives, sisters, and sweethearts, all present on the occasion were too full of joy to care to conceal their happiness. There was, nevertheless, one individual present who had no share in the general feeling of gladness, whose heart was, on the contrary, full of suppressed passion, hatred, and jealousy. This individual, however, was not a member of the fisher community. He was one Lucien Pierrot, the son of a rich *bourgeois* of Paris, who owned considerable property in Honfleur and its vicinity. Lucien was accustomed frequently to visit the town to receive the rents from his father's tenants, and on other matters of business; for though he was a gambler and spendthrift, and addicted to many other vices, he was an only son, and his father, though often deceived, continued to place confidence in him. During one of these visits, at the date of the annual Honfleur fair, Lucien met with Madeleine—who was visiting the fair with a party of female friends—and was struck with the grace and beauty of the young fisher-girl. He sought to introduce himself to her by offering her trifling presents as 'fairings'; but the fisher-folk are an exclusive class, who hold themselves aloof from strangers. Madeleine declined, bashfully, yet decidedly, to accept the proffered gifts, and strove to avoid the young man's attentions. In nowise disconcerted, however, Lucien, taking advantage of the license allowed at fair-time, attached himself to the party, in the hope of inducing Madeleine to look more favourably upon him, by ingratiating himself with her companions. All his gallantry was, however, thrown away. The young women took no heed of him; and separated for their respective abodes without bestowing one parting word or glance upon him.

Unaccustomed to be thus cavalierly treated by young women whom he honoured with his attentions, Lucien had been in the habit of using every effort to win Madeleine's affections. He dared not visit her at her home in the village, for he

was well aware of the pride and independence of the fisher-folk, who would stand on little ceremony with him if it became known to them that he was intruding his attentions upon one of their young people. But he contrived to meet her whenever she strolled beyond the village; and when, twice a week, she attended the market at Honfleur, he was always present, and was a frequent and liberal purchaser of the fancy wares she offered for sale. Always civil, and even polite in his manner towards her, he gave her no opportunity to complain of his conduct to her friends; yet, though she strove in every way to make it apparent to him that his presence was disagreeable to her, she was unable to shake him off. At length he grew more bold, and ventured to speak of his affection for her, and entreated her to accompany him to Paris, promising to make her his wife immediately on their arrival in that city. But he met with such a withering repulse, that he instantly regretted his temerity. The look of anger and scorn in the eyes of the young girl and the tone of her voice, told plainly that she was in earnest; and from that time, he had ceased his open persecutions. But he nevertheless resolved to gain his end by some other means. He had discovered that Madeleine was betrothed to a young fisherman; and though Antoine was personally unknown to him, Lucien conceived a mortal hatred for him, and vowed that if he failed in his object, he would find some way of revenging himself both on the young girl and her lover.

On the day when the fleet arrived in port, and the fisherwomen and girls were assembled on the wharfs, as already described, to greet their long absent husbands and lovers, Lucien also might have been seen skulking in the background, wrapped in a cloak, drawn up so as to conceal his features, eagerly watching the fishermen as they leaped on shore. He saw Madeleine on the wharf; and then he saw a handsome young fisherman, who, the moment he landed, was clasped in the young girl's embrace. He ground his teeth with impotent rage, and in his eagerness to get a good view of Antoine, stepped a few paces forward, and allowed the cape of his cloak to fall back.

As Antoine and Madeleine were forcing a passage through the crowd, Madeleine caught a momentary glimpse of her detested persecutor. The young girl shuddered involuntarily; and Antoine tenderly inquired whether she felt cold. Madeleine was almost inclined to acquaint her lover with the cause of her alarm; but she dreaded the immediate consequences of such a disclosure, and feeling secure in her lover's protection, she deemed it advisable to keep her secret. 'Now that Antoine has returned, and our marriage will so soon take place,' she thought, 'that bad man will see that it will be useless to trouble me any longer, and will no doubt return to Paris.'

Lucien continued to follow the young couple at a distance, midway to the village. Had he dared, he would have interposed himself between the lovers; but Lucien was naturally a coward; he knew that the stalwart young fisherman would have crushed him as easily as he could have flung a child from him, and he was forced to content himself with brooding over

plans of vengeance. He could do nothing just now; but he thought it probable that after her lover had again gone to sea, Madeleine would be more amenable to his advances and persuasions. And if such were not the case, he believed in his power to find some means of wreaking his vengeance upon both. So he turned aside from following them further that day, and left the happy and youthful couple to the enjoyment of each other's society.

HUMOURS OF IRISH DISTRICT VISITING.

'MISS MARTHA, it's Anty Dillon's Molly that's here. Her mother is tearin' mad wid the toothache, an' would ye be aftler givin' her the laste taste in life of jam, she says, if you plaze, to take the stang out of her mouth, an' help her swalley the bit o' bread? She hasn't sleep' or et for two days.'

'Miss Ellen has gone out with the keys, and won't be back till after the Bible class.'

'Shure, I tould her that, Miss, an' she says she'll come agin bime-by.'

'Jam for toothache!' I exclaimed.

'Yes; it is a grand specific,' said Martha drily, 'especially in families where there are children. There is an epidemic of toothache this spring. Last year it was influenza, till I began to give black currant vinegar instead of jam. But vinegar won't do for the teeth, you know.—And now I am sorry I must leave you for an hour; one of my old women is dying, and another has sent to say she is "downhearted," and wants to see me particularly.'

'May I go with you? I would like it, if they don't mind.'

'Oh, they will be delighted to see a strange lady. But I am afraid you will find it lugubrious. Their talk will be all about death and the grave, this time. However, it will be characteristic, and possibly amusing; so, come along.'

'You see,' said my friend as we set out, 'the Roman Catholics are as twelve to one in the town, but there are a good many Protestants for all that—poor ones, and the Archdeacon is very careful of them. He knows them all personally, and their circumstances, and goes to see them himself when necessary. The parish is divided into districts, with a lady-visitor for each. We go our rounds once a week regularly, and report to the Archdeacon anything that requires his attention. And if our people fall into necessity or tribulation, want advice or help, they send for us, or come to us, at any time. "I niver felt the loss o' me father an' mother till Miss Mary got married an' wint away," said an old woman to me once, speaking of one of us who had left the town. They often tell me I am like a mother to them.—Here we are at Mrs Nolan's. Yes; she's still alive, I see.'

It was the usual mud cabin, the open door admitting to the one room which served as kitchen, sitting-room, and chamber of death. A kettle was boiling on the hearth, and a teapot stood by. Two or three women sat round the fire, waiting for the final scene. The place was swept, and the furniture set in order; and by the bed, where an old woman lay slumbering fitfully, a chair was placed for visitors.

'Shure, you're just in time, Miss Martha—she's goin' fast,' said one of the women as she came forward and welcomed us.—'Yis, Miss, she's sinnible.—Ye know Miss Martha, Biddy, don't ye?'

A smile came over the wrinkled features, and the heavy lids unclosed.

'Now, won't she make a purty corpse if she only looks like that at the last!' said the woman admiringly.

'I am glad to see her so calm and peaceful,' whispered Martha.

'Isn't it a comfort, Miss?' cried the woman out loud. 'An' it's the work o' the world we had wid her till yesterday only, whin His Riverince himself cum down an' rasoned her into common-sense, an' she guv her consint to go to the new cimethry, quiet an' asy.'

'To go to the new cemetery?'

'Yis, Miss. Shure, she held out agin it to the last; said it was a horrid, cowl'd, lonesome place, an' she'd niver lie comfortable there, wid niver a bone or a pinch o' dust o' one belongin' to her within a mile. Cart-horses, she said, shouldn't drag her there, or to any place except a good churchyard full o' dacent Christian neighbours. But the Archdeacon argued the matther well. "Biddy," sis he, "be rasonable now. Where in all the counthry-side would you find a wholesomer place to be laid in," sis he, "than the new cimethry?—a fine, open, airy place, high an' dhry. An' as for lonesomeness," sis he, "shure, it's fillin' ivery day—it is. Ye'll have the neighbours gatherin' all round you in no time. An' I'll tell you what I'll do for you," he sis; "if you'll consint to go there quietly, I'll put you nixt Mrs Donovan—shure, ye know her—an' thin ye won't feel lonely or out o' the way wid her within call." So thin she guv in.'

'Yis, I guv in,' said the dying woman feebly. 'I couldn't howld out agin His Riverince. There's no denyin' that Mary Donovan 'ud be a good neighbour, quiet an' asy, an' niver an ill word out o' her head; but I'd rather be laid alongside o' Nolan. A good husband he was to me, an' niver as much as riz his hand to me all the days we wor together—barrin' he was in dhrink an' unconscious-like.'

'Alongside o' Nolan! Just listen to her now! And Oonagh churchyard twenty mile o' rough road away. Shure, it's battered to bits you'd be afore you got there, Biddy alanna. Yer ould bones 'ud niver stan' the jowlin'. An' prehaps it's come to bits the coffin would, they make 'em so thin nowadays.'

'Ay, ay; I know how thin funerals go gallopin' whin they git out o' the town; I'd be shook all to pieces, I'm feared, an' so I guv my consint to go to the cimethry. It's an asy road enough; an' what does it matther, afther all, whin the good God is in one place as much as another!'

Martha stooped down and whispered a few words. 'Yis, Miss Martha, I know; I'm none feared o' that. But I'm too far gone to spake much, honey. Then the heavy lids dropped again over the glassy eyes, and I thought I saw an added shade on the gray face.

'I think she's goin' now, glory be to God! I know that look.'

'Miss Martha, could you be afther singin' a bit o' a hymn? That would bring her to, if

anythin' mortal could; she was always foud o' the singin',' said the woman.

Martha hesitated, looked at the still face, and then at me.—'Rock o' Ages,' I whispered—and she began the dear old hymn at 'While I draw this fleeting breath.'

I saw the pale lips move, and stooped down.

'Nolan's voice! Shure, I'd know it a mile off.—Ye're late, man; hurry on. It's tired o' waitin' I am.—Och, but ye're the pick of the world for the singin'!—It's gettin' cowl'd, alanna, an' the night's fallin', Nolan, an' I'm waried out.—Here you are at long-last. Glory be to God!—Nolan!'

'Glory be to God!' echoed one of the women, 'she's gone.'

It was even so. Had Nolan really come up the 'dark valley' to meet her, I wondered, as Martha stopped, and the women broke into ready Irish tears and ejaculations, in the midst of which we moved away.

The person who had acted as mistress of the ceremonies followed us to the door. 'Wasn't it well she didn't go back o' her word about the new cimethry? An' won't she make a lovely corpse, Miss Martha, wid that pleasant look on her face? We'll sind to the house for the things, Miss?'

'Yes; Jane will give them.'

'Sheets and things,' explained Martha to me, as we walked away, 'for the wake, you know. They festoon them round the bed, and cover over the tables with white. We always keep some to lend for the purpose.—But here is my "down-hearted" old woman looking out for me. I wonder what she wants cheerin' up for this time.'

'Come in, come in, Miss Martha.—An' you, Miss.—Shure, it's most wora out I am, lookin' for you.'

The poor old soul evidently felt aggrieved. A sickly-looking creature, with bright eyes, and a crooked back, which showed plainly, as she presently began to rock backwards and forwards on her stool. The one room was bare of comfort. As stranger visitor, I was installed on the only unbroken chair, while Martha balanced herself on a three-legged elderly one.

'I came as soon as I could,' said Martha. 'I was delayed at Mrs Nolan's. She is dead.'

'Och, wirra, wirra! Is she gone, thin? That's what I sint for you for, Miss Martha. Shure, His Riverince, he sis, I'll be the next. He had the heart to say that to me, a poor crooked old body.'

'He couldn't say that, Mrs Morris; you must have misunderstood him.'

'Deed, an' he did, thin—thin very words—standin' there foreninst me on the flure. "Mrs Morris," sis he, "Mrs Nolan is goin' fast; she'll be in glory afore another sun sets over her head." "God forbid, sir!" sis I.—"She will," sis he. "An' the question is," he sis, "which of us will be the next to be called away? It behoves us to be prepared," sis he.'

'That was not saying you would be the next.'

'Ah, but it was, Miss Martha, just all as one o' sayin' it. A hearty, able, active man like him, what thought would he have o' dyin'? An' sorra preparation he wants! He might jist walk into heaven any day, wid a flower in his button-hole,

an' "God save all hore!" on his lips.—No, no, Miss; it was niver himself he meant at all, at all, but me. "Mary Morris, you're goin' to die, an' you're not ready"—that's the manin' of his spache.

'And are you ready, Mrs Morris, if you should be called next?'

'I'm not, Miss Martha, an' I don't want to be called yet a bit; I want to live my life out. That's why I sint for you. I want you to pray the good God this night to let me live out me full life.'

'Why, you are an old woman, and a great sufferer, and I should think you would be thankful to be released.'

'Well, I wouldn't, thin. You see, Miss Martha, it's not as if I was a strong, able-bodied woman. Thin, I couldn't complain whin me time was out. I've always been ailin' an' wake, an' niver got more nor half the good out o' life that others got; an' I think it 'ud be only fair o' the good God to let me live twice as long, to make it even an' just.—You'll ask Him, Miss Martha, honey?'

'I'll pray for you, certainly, Mrs Morris, that you may not be taken away before you are ready and willing.'

'Some payple are quare, an' say it's a wary world, an' they'd like to be gone from it; but I'm not that kind. The worst day I iver had, Miss Martha, I niver wished I was dead. You've tuk a load off me mind, alanna, for I'm sure the Lord 'll hear you. He's very good to thim that put Him in mind of their wants.'

'Very, very good and pitiful. You remember what David says?—

'Shure, I wasn't thinkin' o' David,' interrupted the old creature ruthlessly. 'I was goin' to tell you about me own mother's first-cousin, ould Molly Malone. She was an ould, ould woman, an' not a bit like me, for she raly wanted to die. But she lived, an' lived, till she could bear it no longer, an' she bedridden for five year an' more. So sis sho to her son Tim one day—he was her youngest son, an' gettin' to be an ould boy too, waitin' for the mother's death to bring home a wife—"Tim," sis she, "I'm thinkin' the Lord has forgotten me."—"Faith, an' I'm o' that same opinion meself, mother," he sis.—"I don't like to be overlooked," sis she. "Yoke the dunkey, Tim," she sis, "an' wrap me in me cloak, an' carry me up to the top o' the road, till I put Him in reminbrance," sis she.—An' he did. He put an ould bed in the cart, an' her atop of it, an' jowlited her up to the top o' the hill an' down agin widout a word. An' signs on it! Miss Martha, whin he stopped at his own dure, she was a dead woman.—"Troth, an' she was in the right of it," sis Tim. "As soon as iver He seen her, Ho kindly give her the call."

'I think the jolting had something to do with it,' said Martha, rising.—'Mrs Morris, I can't stay longer now. I will come and read to you another day. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye; an' thank ye kindly, Miss. I feel quite cheered up now, honey.'

'Isn't it extraordinary,' said I to Martha, when we were out of the house, 'the clingin' to life some people show? The poorer and more miserable they are, the less desire they evince to give it up.'

'Except they think they are being overlooked,' said Martha, 'like old Molly Malone. I've heard that story so often, I can't laugh at it. She only told it to put me off reading the psalm for her.—See! there are the almshouses,' continued Martha, pointing to a row of neat little houses, with pretty porches and gardens in front. 'We won't go in. It's not my day. They are not very pleasant to talk to, poor things, just now. You see their endowment is in land, and for the last two years, owing to "Land League" and other troubles, there has been no rent paid. But for the Archdeacon, they would actually starve. He pays their weekly money out of his own pocket. It is just the same with the Orphan Fund, and Aged and Infirm Protestant Relief Fund. I don't know what we shall come to in the end; the Archdeacon can't go on supporting all the poor of the parish in this way.'

'Why doesn't he get help from the people around?'

'He can't. They have not any money. The gentry are most of them living on borrowed money, waiting for better times; and the shopkeepers say business is bad. Lawyers are the only people who are making anything.—Oh! just wait a minute! This is Anty Dillon's.'

A soft-looking woman, with bare, red arms flecked with soap-suds, came to the open door at the sound of our voices. 'Good-evenin', Miss Martha!—Won't you come in, Miss?'

'Not to-day, Anty, thank you.—When did you hear from your daughter Rosanna? I hope she gets on well in her situation?'

'Deed, thin, Miss Martha, not to be afther tellin' you a lie, she don't like it at all, at all. She's for comin' home agin.'

'Why? I heard it was a very good, easy place.'

'Sho's not faultin' the sickuation, Miss; but, shure, no servant stays in it, specially housemaids, an' so she give notice to lave this quarter.'

'For what reason?'

'The misthress. Nobody can put up wid her. She doesn't kill thim with work, but she waries thim out with nonsical talk about their sowls, Miss, as if they were on the point o' death. But shure, she's not a Protestant at all, Miss Martha; she is one o' thim Methodees.'

Martha turned away in vexation. 'I had the greatest work to get her that place, and now she is leaving it for nothing. They are miserably poor; and she will come home, and live with them till her money is all gone and her clothes in pawn, and then she will expect me to find her another place.'

'Her mother oughtn't to encourage her as she does.'

Here Martha began to laugh. 'Her mother! Didn't you recognise her? That was Anty Dillon, who was reported as "tearin' mad with the toothache," an hour ago.'

'And wantin' a bit of jam to help her to eat and sleep! She doesn't look much pulled down by her sufferings.'

'Wait till I catch Molly, I'll jam her!' said Martha, in a tone of good-natured vexation.

Presently we came to a neat, whitewashed, tidy-looking, two-roomed cabin.

'This is one of our Orphan Homes,' explained

Martha. 'Our way is to put the children by families, under the care of respectable elderly people, who bring them up as if they were their own. It answers very well. Brothers and sisters are not separated. They have all the advantages of home-life; and the tie between them and their foster-parents strengthens with time into real filial affection in many cases.—Our orphans generally turn out well,' continued Martha with excusable pride. 'We look after them, educate them to some extent, bind them to trades, or find situations for them as servants. But I think a great deal of their future success depends on the foster-mother. This woman has brought up two families most creditably, who are all doing for themselves in the world now.—Good-evening, Mrs. Moore! How are the children?'

A bustling little woman, in an old-fashioned cap and a big apron, turned round from scrubbing a deal table with freestone. 'Good-evenin' kindly to you, ladies! Wait till I take off my *praseen*,' denuding herself rapidly as she spoke of the apron, and dusting two white chairs with it. 'Won't ye sit down, Miss, afther yer long walk?—Shure the childhre is well an' hearty, thank God! They are away at the school now.'

'No, thank you; we won't sit down now. You're busy. I only came in with these little things for Betty. I think they will fit her.'

'Och! they'll be made to fit, Miss. She was just wantin' thim; an' wasn't it the good Lord put it into yer mind to bring thim this day, before the rain comes.'

'Mrs. Moore,' said Martha hesitatingly, 'did you hear there would not be so much money as usual this month?'

'I did, Miss. The Archdeacon come himself to insuse me into the reason of it. He was rale downcast. I tould him niver to trouble about it; shure, we'll git along somehow.'

'How will you manage this month on so little?'

'Well, Miss, you see, Moore has got a stroke o' work. That will be a help. An' I had a letter from Amerikay, from Judy—you remember little Judy Grace, Miss Martha?—an' she sint me a little matter o' money, an' that'll tide us over a month or more. An' indade, the other childhre will niver let me want the bit o' bread while they have it. They're rale good in sindin' me things.'

'But they send the money for your own use.'

'For me an' Moore. Yes, Miss. Shure, they look on us as their father an' mother. They can't remember no others, the cratures.'

'Will they like your spending it on these children, who are nothing to you or them?'

'Miss Martha, do you take me for a brute baste, to have the bit an' sup meself an' see the fatherless go hungry?'

There was real surprise and indignation in the good woman's manner. Martha felt called on to apologise for her implied suspicion of ungenerosity; and we then turned our steps homeward.

'Another trait of the Irish peasantry,' I remarked; but my companion was absent-minded, and made no response. 'We must pass Tom Daly's,' she said after some meditation. 'I ought

to speak to him, I suppose; but I don't know what to say. He is a Protestant; but I heard he went to the Roman Catholic chapel on Wednesday night, and walked in the procession of penitents. He was tipsy, of course; but that makes it all the worse.'

The said Tom held down his head, and busied himself with an old shoe he was patching, as Martha entered his little cobbler's shop. I stood modestly in the door, and listened.

'Tom, what is this I hear about your doings on Wednesday night?'

'Musha! I donno, Miss Martha. People is more nor their prayers.'

'Didn't you go to mass and walk in the procession before all the chapel full of people?'

'Shure, I wasn't in me senses, Miss; I was unconscious. The boys made me just half-dead; an', faix, I donno what I did or didn't do, thin.'

'Tom, if you would only take the pledge, it might be the saving of you.'

'Shure, I'm willin' enough to take it, Miss Martha, if that will do you; but the keepin' it is another matter. I've taken it often an' often; but sorra bit o' good that did me. It was worse nor ever I was, as soon as I broke it.'

'Tom, I wouldn't mind so much your going to mass, if you were in sober earnest. I would rather have you a good Catholic than a drunken Protestant.'

'Oh, Miss Martha, is it you to think so little o' me as that? An' does His Riverince seriously believe I'd do such a mane thing as turn? Drunk or sober, I'll niver belie me church an' clargy. Miss Martha, I'll tell you what I'll do. I wint to mass, there's no denyin', on Wednesday night; but I was tipsy—bad seran to thim that tuk me!—but I'll go to church this blessed night sober, and with me eyes open. There's for you! That'll convince His Riverince. Shure, I niver was in church on a week-day afore, barrin' the day I was married; but I'd do more nor that to show the Archdeacon I was no turncoat.'

Tom did go to church that Friday night, and edified the congregation by his serious demeanour.

Coming out of the shop, Martha encountered a lively group of girls and boys, when she, to my surprise, seized the biggest girl by the shoulder and gave her a good shake. 'I have just seen your mother, Molly Dillon. What did you mean, you naughty girl, by telling such a story? Don't you know that?' &c.

I need not give the sermon which followed. Molly looked frightened, and the other children interested.

Suddenly a little boy, with the bluest eyes and reddest hair I had ever seen, pushed forward.

'An' did Molly tell ye a lie, Miss Martha?'

'She did, Jack.'

'An' it's an awful wicked thing to tell a lie, Miss?'

'It is, Jack, awfully wicked.'

'An'—an' it's worse to tell two nor one, Miss?' cried Jack, stammering in his eagerness.—Martha assented.—'Miss Martha, you tould us on Sunday last that the man that made another do a wrong thing was the wickedest o' the two. It was all as one as if he did it himself, only maner.—Miss Martha, if you don't give Molly the jam, you'll

be ather makin' her tell *two* lies. She promised us a rale trate this evenin'.—"Miss Martha is goin' to give me a cup o' jam," she sis, "an' I'll give yez every one a taste."—She promised, Miss; an' she can't kape her word if you make her break it.

Martha stood nonplussed.

I stepped forward to the rescue. 'She promised you a treat. Now, would sugar-stick do as well as jam?'

'Faix, an' it would, Miss, an' betther.'—A general chorus.

'And you would hold that Molly had honourably kept her word, if she gave you a stick each?'—Approving grins, nods, and asseverations.—'Well, let me see. How many of you are there? Five?—Will that do?'

General delight, and a rush towards the confectioner's.

'If you had that young imp in your class Sunday after Sunday,' said Martha ungratefully, as we reached her own door, 'you would not be so ready to encourage his impudence with sixpences. But I'm glad the day's work is over.'

CINDERELLA DOWN-STAIRS.

AFTER telling us about an animal in its wild or natural state, Natural History sometimes adds the characteristics of its domestic condition. In like manner, we have all heard of Cinderella in her natural state, surrounded by the infinite possibilities of a fairy tale; and also of Cinderella in her domestic state, in which her habits and aspects are somewhat different, and rather more interesting, than those of her former state, because they have the advantage of being real. Cinderella down-stairs has not a bountiful god-mother; often 'the Parish' has been her step-mother, and she is an 'orfling,' like the hand-maiden of the distressed Micawbers. She never gets a glass slipper, yet her shoes are transparent enough; and how the other Cinderella ever danced in glass slippers, is a marvel to us, when this poor Cinderella is always breaking glass that nobody touched, by means of an invisible cat that haunts the shelves, as other cats haunt the garden walls. But the domestic Cinderella is, at least in her occupations, like her prototype of the story. She does hard service, and is despised, and sits among the cinders. No god-mother, no dressing for a ball, no mouse-horses and walnut-shell carriage, are before her, leading through a bright vista to her destiny and to a Prince with a shining shoe in his hand. This Cinderella has not even heard of fairy transformations; she was never in Fairyland; she was never a child as other children are. Hers is the most unromantic life in the world; she lives down-stairs in unromantic regions of scrubbing and rubbing, and soap and cinders.

The best description of the common domestic Cinderella is of course from the pen that described 'the Marchioness,' and from the hand that was always finding diamonds where we blind folks only see vulgar dust. There is many a Mar-

chioness in every street of the shabby-genteel districts of all great towns. Tradesmen's wives and lodging-house keepers oppress and are oppressed by a long succession of them; and in the picture of the 'slavey' of the Dragon of Bevis Marks, lies only the strong-featured portrait of ten thousand elsewhere without the title and the cribbage. 'The Marchioness' as deftly drawn by Dickens, is an old-fashioned child who must have been at work from her cradle, afraid of a stranger, but cunning and clever—a small slipshod girl in a dirty coarse apron and bib, which left nothing of her visible but her face and feet: she might as well have been dressed in a violin-case. She does all the work of the house, is miserably lodged, scantily fed, and treated like a grown-up drudge; as the natural result of which hard treatment she acquires a habit of 'cooling her eye' at keyholes and generally developing her cunning. But deep down in her heart is a germ of love and self-forgetfulness and homely faithfulness, that the first touch of sympathy rouses into life once and for ever. There is something exquisitely touching in the half-sad, half-comic way in which this slipshod 'slavey,' aproned in her canvas violin-case, becomes an angel unawares. But under many a canvas bib there is a heart that is never found; poor Cinderella remains a cheap automaton; and whether she is a child, or a woman, or a witch, or a mechanical contrivance, there is no time to think, or nobody to care.

'The Marchioness' did not know how old she was; but she was in every way, except growth, an extremely-developed specimen of Cinderella. The age of these wonderful human creatures ranges from eleven to fifteen or sixteen. Most of them have had no household training, and come in the dullness of ignorance and in utter poverty out of the cheerless 'Union,' or out of miserable homes with the saddest surroundings. But the great marvel is—and it is one of the startling marvels that show on the ugly side of human nature—that these old children or diminutive women, whichever you like to call them, are expected to be perfection; and are turned adrift, as if they had come on false pretences, when their deficiencies appear—are sent elsewhere for the joltings and hard rubs of life to knock into shape their character and acquirements. They are to teach and train themselves, if they are not, as every proper-minded Cinderella should be, ready-made perfection; and if the jolts and hard rubs knock them to pieces, instead of knocking them into shape—again, nobody knows, and nobody cares.

Poor little Cinderella! only hired, and nobody's child. There is no one to believe she is a child at all; no one to care for herself and her future for her own sake; no one to teach her with kindness and with patience; no one to remember that when the cat and the mice cause mysterious disappearances, the fault, and not its doer, ought to be made to disappear; and that even when the china is broken, the ways of the breaker may be mended. Cinderella is at the most tractable age: she is the very same age as the boys and girls at school, or perhaps younger; nor can she be made a woman yet, by any amount of poverty, hurry, and drudgery all the week through. But it would be a mistake to say she is a child, for

all that. Alas! the poor have but short childhood, or none; and Cinderella down-stairs is one of the old children. Pity her, then, the more; and remember, in her provoking failings, that but for her many lifelong miseries, she would be a child; that she sometimes needs rest, enjoyment, sympathy; and that when any of us come across her, our kind word will not be thrown away upon the poor little ill-starred girl.

We have more sympathy with Cinderella of the kitchen, notwithstanding her tatters and untaught ways, than with her cousins who get a better start in life, as neat little maids in a nursery, or as the last and least in the divided work of a great house, where little country girls, rosy and fresh, fare plentifully in the servants' hall. Cinderella is much poorer, and often much younger; her life is far more laborious, and has less change or considerate treatment; and she is much more humble and grateful, which, after all, makes the strongest claim on our good-will. For Cinderella, though she grows up to be a Susan-Jane, seldom has a chance of becoming one of those upper servants who, in common with the gout and the powder-tax, are among the necessary evils of riches. She will never outrage Society by hinting a taste for blue china, or requesting leave of absence to attend a Language-of-Flowers Bee. She will never irritate us with the boast of the lady's-maid, who capped her list of qualifications by remarking that she had always married-off her young ladies satisfactory. She will never, in dearth of note-paper, offer her mistress 'a few sheets of mine, mum, if you won't mind using my monnygram.' Nor will she imitate that housemaid, with whose description and parting remark Mr Punch frightened the advertising public: the young person applying for a housemaid's situation where a footman was kept, who objected to children, was engaged to and visited by a most 'spectable young man in The 'Orse Artillery, and had a fortnight's character from her last place—but who, not exactly suiting the advertiser, retired observing: 'I really ham sorry, mum, for I rather like your appearance, mum!'

No; Cinderella down-stairs is not of the species from which these awful beings are selected; she is far more harmless and helpless. She is an overworked, unguarded, unloved specimen of those most pitiable of mortals, the Old Children; and, as such, if we think rightly, most pitiable, and sadly interesting. For every variety of the Old Child is interesting, as every one is pitiable. Of course, it is well for Cinderella down-stairs that she has her woman's work to do and her loveless life to get; her poverty makes both a boon. But it is ill for her—and the knowledge of it marks a blot in our estimate of human nature—that once she gets into her fiddle-caso of a canvas apron and bib, no one believes any more how young she is; and she might as well, for all practical purposes, be like Dick Swiveller's Marchioness, a little patriarch in patters with no idea of her own age.

Farewell, Cinderella! You are one of the necessities of our crowded cities; and after glancing at your unchildlike lot and your unloving treatment, we must leave you where we found you, yourself not knowing that you have yet the childlike right of your young years to be

considerately taught, forgiven, cared for. Sit down among the cinders. Your sisters are in bright homes, or pleasant school-rooms, or play-rooms noisy with laughter. Or some of them, a little older, are thinking of 'coming out,' dressing gaily, driving to the balls and parties to which no fairy godmother will take you, and at which, indeed, if you were present, poor Cinderella, you would be but a sorry figure! This is every-day life, you see, you wizen-faced child of work; there will be no Prince, and no glass slipper; and if you envy your little sisters their kisses, no one is going to be kind to you; and if you have ever heard of the balls to which your big sisters are going, it is presumption in you to need pleasure of some sort too. You are one of the unchildish children growing into womanhood; and the world assumes, by some odd freak of reasoning, that all unchildish children born to work are able to take care of themselves with impish precocity, the moment they have got out of the cradle and laid hold of the broomstick!

NIGHT.

The earth is veiled in twilight gray,
Day wings her flight;
The worshipped sun is borne away
On blushing waves of amber light;
Come then, thou Maid, and be our Queen;
Nought shall disturb thy reign serene,
O dark-eyed Night!

The weary earth mourns not the death
Of busy day;
The sighing wind now holds her breath,
To list to Philomela's lay;
And Night-wood buds, asleep since morn,
Awake, and hasten to adorn
Thy regal way.

'Mid dusky spheres is raised for thee
A throne on high;
The budding stars await to see,
The crescent moon come gliding by.
Then they'll entwine thy raven hair;
And Cynthia on thy bosom fair
Will gently lie.

Love lights his lamp, then steals away
To Psyche's bower;
And Hope, who twines her wreath by day,
Now hides in heart of drowsy flower.
Come, wave thy strange enchanted wand,
In magic circles o'er the land,
From thy dark tower.

I hear the tread of silver feet,
O coming Night!
Thou turnest, like a vision sweet,
The misty darkness into light.
I see thee now, and at thy side
Is gliding sleep—the dreamy-eyed—
Thrice welcome Night!

E. M. B.

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A SAFE INVESTMENT.

DURING the last two or three years, the attention of our readers has from time to time been called to the question of Thrift, its encouragements and discouragements. With regard to the subject of hospital relief, we have pointed out the weakness of that easy-going charity which gives indiscriminately, and does not pause to consider that to 'help the poor to help themselves,' and to teach them the lesson of making provision for a rainy day, is a far higher boon than any amount of mere alms-giving. The Provident Dispensary, which, it is earnestly to be hoped, will in a great measure supersede our present system of free relief, has the unspeakable advantage of inculcating habits of forethought and of preparation for the future. It is the object of the present paper to deal with a kindred question, which should commend itself to the careful consideration of every thoughtful man.

The subject of Life Assurance is one which has for over a hundred and fifty years been slowly but surely working its way and gaining ground in our midst. Beginning from the smallest seeds in the seventeenth century, it is now a mighty tree, bearing rich and ripe fruits of comfort and help to thousands. It is pleasing to find that in spite of much apparent extravagance and recklessness in our present mode of living, this important subject is attracting more and more popular notice and favour. Yet, widespread as is the interest in this important subject, it is by no means as universal as it should be, for there are indeed few heads of families who can afford to be indifferent to the possibility of making adequate and immediate provision for those dependent upon them, in case of their sudden removal. With the recent memory of such a catastrophe as that at Vienna, it behoves every man seriously to consider the fact as indisputable, that in the midst of life we are in death, and so to consider it that not a day shall be lost in securing wife and children against the bitter sufferings of grinding poverty. Let any father of a family take up

a daily paper and run his eye down the columns of 'Situations Wanted,' and he will find constantly repeated, 'Gentlewoman by birth,' or 'Widow of a professional man,' seeking for means of earning their daily bread as governesses or companions, and often for less wages than they in their prosperous days would have given to their cook; then let him reflect on the fact that in the vast majority of cases this is the sad result of the neglect of the head of a family to make provision for the future, and surely he will see to it that such a cruel fate shall not befall his own dependents.

Still, there are few men worthy of the name who do not mean to make provision for their children at some future time, and who would not indignantly repudiate the charge of deliberately intending to leave them dependent upon charity. Yet to most men, in the poorer and middle classes at any rate, it is almost an impossibility to make an adequate provision for anything like a large family by means of simply putting aside a portion of their income, and this even where life is spared to its utmost limit. What we hold is, that no man has a right to be in such a position that were he to be suddenly removed, those remaining would be left destitute. Now, every holder of a life-policy for a reasonable sum, has the comfort of reflecting that whatever happen to him, even should he be cut off suddenly and without warning, there need be no crushing poverty and bitter struggle to be added to the inevitable sorrow of bereavement.

The nature and principles of Assurance may be briefly summed up in the old proverb, 'Union is strength;' and put into familiar language, may be termed an association of persons agreeing to do in company, what, to the individual alone, would be an impossibility. In every variety of insurance this is accomplished by each member paying a certain sum annually into a general fund, in which capital becomes gradually productive. This is done on the understanding that at some fixed time each will receive his individual share with whatever of

interest and profit may have accumulated. In the case of Life Assurance, this fixed time is the time of death, and the sum insured becomes in the majority of cases a last legacy of love, to cheer the hearts of sorrowing survivors. Nor is there in this, as might seem at first sight, anything of the nature of a lottery; for although as regards the individual, nothing can be more uncertain than the time of his death, as regards any large number of persons nothing can be surer than the average duration of their lives.

This principle of average is by no means confined to the subject of Assurance; for it may safely be taken for granted that whatever event has happened once, will happen again, and in reference to large numbers, will happen a certain number of times in a given period. To take an instance from every-day life. In the Postmaster's annual Report there is always mention made of a certain number of letters posted without being fastened or addressed, and it has been ascertained, in reference to the total number of letters posted in a twelvemonth, that the average of careless senders is similar year by year. In the same way, it has been ascertained by careful collection of statistics, that in a population of a given number, there will be a certain percentage of fires, of railway accidents, and of deaths from stated causes—in short, a certain fixed recurrence of all the ills and changes that flesh is heir to. From this it may be seen that in dealing with large numbers, it needs no magician's spell to read the future with something like certainty; and it is this approximation to certainty which eliminates almost all question of risk or chance in reference to our subject, and makes it safe to reckon upon coming events. Surely he is the wise man who so reckons on the future as to provide for the one event which *must*—not simply may—happen to us all.

Nor is it possible to exaggerate the difference it will make to a man himself and to those near and dear to him, whether he has been content to take as his motto, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;' or whether, looking bravely into the future, he has made such provision as to enable those depending upon him to be at least beyond the reach of want, or better still, to continue their ordinary way of life, should they be left at any time to their own resources.

But, apart from the primary object of making a provision for the future, there are other considerations in reference to this matter of Life Assurance which deserve to be brought forward. It will hardly be denied that of all things which tend to make a man happy and useful, nothing exceeds the formation of good habits—habits that will enable him to possess that greatest of blessings, a healthy mind in a healthy body; and towards this desirable end

Life Assurance gives a decided impetus and help.

In the first place, this act of providing for the future of others is in direct opposition to that natural selfishness which lies at the root of so much of the misery of life. The really selfish man who can see things only through his own spectacles, and who in all he says and does has only the gratification of self in view, is he not also one of the most miserable of men? For of all hard and exacting masters, Self is the most tyrannical, and the least easily pleased. Now, when a man comes out of himself sufficiently to look forward into the future for the sake of others, he is surely taking a step in the right direction towards unselfishness and happiness; for it is a distinct law of our nature that these two things shall go together; and if you want to find a truly happy man, look for one who forgets himself in thinking of others. This habit of unselfishness is, to say the least, likely to be encouraged by the keeping up of a life-policy; for it is not a single action performed on the spur of the moment and done with, but a thing to be remembered and provided for; and as each annual payment becomes due, the man is reminded afresh of the fact that he does not live for himself alone, and that he has certain duties in relation to others which he, and he alone, can fulfil.

Another point in connection with this yearly payment is the strong impulse it gives to the cultivation of habits of forethought, economy, and sobriety. In most cases, where the life is assured in a fair proportion to the income, there will need to be some careful looking forward and arranging of ways and means, in order to be able to lay aside the needful sum. And to this end there must be an exercise of that wise economy which is a blessing alike to rich and poor. Unhappily, this virtue is far too rare amongst us as a nation. It is perhaps most palpable in the case of the working-man who eats and drinks away his money whilst he has work, and then starves in the time of enforced idleness. But though most palpable here, it is no worse than the case happening constantly in the class above the labouring, where the object in life is to pass for being richer than is the fact, and where the earnings of the husband are spent in efforts to outshine the neighbours. The same folly may be seen on every hand, and anything that has a tendency to check this spirit, and to make income and expenditure accord, should have a hearty welcome.

Again, amongst the lower classes especially, the cause of half the misery to be met with is in that terrible want of sobriety which spreads ruin and desolation wherever it is found, and in the train of which follows the gloomy list of dishonesty, cruelty, and crime of every kind. Of those who fall under this sad temptation, a very large percentage are led astray through simple carelessness and want of thought. A young man earning good wages sees no reason why he should not do as he likes with his own, and forgets the fact that 'habit becomes second nature,' and cannot be laid aside at will and without a struggle. Now, it is an obvious fact that anything which tends towards making a man

steady and thoughtful, will have a most salutary effect in checking the formation of habits which, merely idle and careless at starting, have in them the germs of every sort of sin and crime. Surely, to face the future in such a manner as to induce him to provide for it on behalf of those who shall be dependent upon him, will help a man to study economy and thrift, and to shun a course which, at the very least, will drain him of his hardly-earned money, and will give him no chance of preparing for a rainy-day.

Another of the incidental benefits of Life Assurance, and one to be by no means passed over lightly, is its tendency towards the strengthening of those family ties which so greatly sweeten life, and make so sacred the associations and endearments of home.

It is a natural and right instinct which makes us desire the respect and love of those about us, and the man must have sunk low indeed who would deliberately act in such a manner as to lower himself in the eyes of those who ought to look up to him with reverent affection. Yet what shall be said of those who are satisfied to live only for the present, and who are too thoughtlessly selfish to consider the possibilities of the future for those whom they profess to love and cherish? There are men, by the thousand, who seem to forget the fact that wife and children can think and feel for themselves, and that sons and daughters as they grow into men and women, will see through, and value at their true worth vague promises for the future which lead to no definite efforts in the present. On the other hand, it is scarcely possible to act rightly in this matter without much of benefit in the present, as well as of blessing in the future. They will be strange children indeed whose hearts do not warm towards the parent whose love shows itself in deeds as well as in words; and there are few wives who will not cling with a closer affection to the husband who shows himself anxious that she and her children shall never be left destitute, or exposed to the tender mercies of a world so often cold and cruel.

One other personal consideration well deserves mention, and this is the freedom from anxiety which security as to the future brings. There is no more prolific source of premature old age and death than the habit of worry, which in this competitive age is rather the rule than the exception. When to the inevitable anxieties of business is added the ghost of a future unprovided for, it is little wonder that body and mind sink under the strain, and that scarcely a day passes without its addition to the records of insanity and suicide. In how many cases might the reason and health be preserved, were it only the present difficulties that had to be met, and were there no need to live up to such high pressure, in the hope of being able to provide for the future! Of course, the mere fact of being insured will not save a man from the inevitable cares and anxieties of life; but what we maintain is, that it will save him from a burden which is otherwise almost too heavy to be borne.

In a further paper, we may speak of insurance under another aspect, in reference to the community at large, and show its decided influence in stimulating the productive industry of a country, in reducing the poor-rates, and in lessening the

cost of prevention of crime. Meanwhile, we trust that enough has been said to commend the subject to the serious consideration of the thoughtful and unprejudiced reader.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXVI.—‘MY DEAD,’ SAID THE OLD LADY, ‘YOU ARE FRETTING ABOUT SOMETHING.’

To Constance's mind, Val's precipitate flight spoke only of a longing and a despair which had grown unendurable. She saw him fighting for honour's sake, flying all he held dear, and going away into a void world which had no chance of solace for him. The true and honest ring of the old cavalier's verse was in her mind, with a meaning in it which was new to her, because she felt it echoing in fancy from her despairing lover's soul:

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

He had fled for honour's sake; and for that, though it wounded her sorely, she half deified him. Once before—as she knew—he had struggled to escape her charm, and had failed. She had trembled to think of that; yet where on earth is the woman who would not have been pleased by so magnificent a compliment? When she could escape from Reginald's presence, she fled to her own room, and cried to think of Val and his love and courage and forlornness. He proved his love by running away from her, and with a rare magnanimity, trusted to her to understand and forgive; nay, perhaps with a magnanimity rarer still, trusted to offend her by the *brusquerie* of his departure, and so turn her heart towards Gerard once again. We who are behind the scenes, and know the course of circumstances which dictated Val's flight, can scarcely share her exalted notions of his delicacy, his honour, and his courage. But howsoever mistaken she might be, her thoughts of him were valuable to herself. ‘He helps me back to the path of honour,’ she said, even while she wept his departure. ‘I am pledged to Gerard, and I must be true to my word. I must try to love Gerard; that is my only real safeguard.’ Poor girl! When did ever love go forth in answer to commandment? Yet there was this help—that Val had put a distance of real reverence between them, and obviously meant to return no more until he could return in safety. She was proud, and she was pure-minded, and purely bred, and habits of thought and feeling are strong things even when assailed by the Passions. She would not scorn herself so far as to fancy that if once she were safely married to Gerard, any man could move her to one unfaithful or regretful thought. And now she began to long for that union to which she had looked forward hitherto either with coldness or with shrinking.

No word from Gerard. She besieged herself with questions as to the meaning of his silence, and could find no answer. Her lovely cheek paled with the inward conflict; and Miss Lucretia, who knew of nothing but happiness in her fortunate niece's lot, must needs send for a doctor, who prescribed a tonic. Constance

submitted, but left his medicine untasted; and Miss Lucretia remonstrated, and had terrible visions of a premature grave for her beautiful niece.

'My dear Constance,' the old lady said at length, being fairly frightened by the girl's languor and want of appetite, and the pallor which had taken the place of her late lovely bloom, 'I must insist—I really must insist upon your taking the mixture.' She poured out a dose, and advanced with it, bearing the wine-glass in one hand, and in the other, daintily held between finger and thumb, a lump of sugar. Constance, too languid to resist, accepted the medicine, but refused the sugar. She had almost lost all sense of taste in her two or three days of illness, and the nauseous bitter scarcely existed for her. Then, being in a mood so tender and sore that all the fibres of heart and mind seemed raw, she began to cry a little at her aunt's caresses. 'My dear,' said the old lady with sudden decision, 'there is something on your mind. You are fretting about something.' Constance peevishly repudiated this idea. Her temper, naturally even and coldly sweet, had within the last day or two grown sickly and uncertain. 'My dear,' repeated the old lady, with gentle but firm insistence, 'there is something on your mind. Did you expect—*him* to follow you to town?'

'I don't know,' said Constance. 'I am not fretting. I am not quite well. That is all.'

'No, my dear,' said Miss Lucretia, with chirpy firmness; 'that is not all.' Miss Lucretia was one of those dear old ladies who are slow to receive ideas, but who having by any process absorbed them, hold on to them with marvellous firmness. 'You are fretting.'

'You are very unkind,' retorted Constance, who was made more miserable by the fact that she could not honourably confide in anybody, and so allowed her misery to recoil in anger. But she was so palpably unhappy, that Miss Lucretia would not be angry in turn. She only put her withered arms about the beautiful neck, and in spite of a feeble resistance, drew her niece's head to her old bosom and swayed her to and fro a little. 'I am ungrateful and wicked, dear aunt,' sobbed the girl, easily melted by this voiceless caressing patience. 'You are not unkind, are you, dear?' And she looked up with violet eyes full of penitence.

'Why should I be unkind to anybody who is in trouble?' asked Miss Lucretia, still clinging to her point, and seizing the chance of putting it forward again. 'I have suffered, and I can sympathise with suffering. Tell me what is the matter.' Miss Lucretia was very sentimental, as tender-hearted old maiden ladies mostly are, and she had a wonderful scent for a love-trouble. Now, 'Ask me no questions and I tell no lies,' is not a proverb of the lofty sort, but it yet holds a word of warning for those who care for wisdom. If you will insist on having the confidence of one who is unwilling to impart it, you ought not in charity to be too amazed if a half-confidence is imposed upon you, or even if you are set upon a wrong scent altogether.

'He might have written,' murmured Beauty in distress, suddenly grown double-faced. Miss Lucretia applied this stricture to the conduct

of Gerard solely, though, as a matter of fact, in Constance's mind it slid between him and Strange, and was aimed at once at both, and neither.

'Is that all?' said Aunt Lucretia. 'You little goose!' She kissed her fair burden patron-like, almost protectingly. The epithet 'little' addressed by Miss Lucretia to Constance was droll. Constance, even whilst labouring under a sense of her own duplicity, smiled furtively. 'My dear,' said the old lady, 'young gentlemen have so many things to think of. And did you not tell me that his father had announced his desire to make arrangements for your future? I have been making inquiries, my dear, and Mr Chichester, who knows a great many City people, assures me that the affairs of Lumby and Lumby are colossal. That was his word, my dear, not mine. Colossal. Now, if the affairs of a House are justly to be described as colossal—and I can repose the most implicit confidence in Mr Chichester, who would not exaggerate for the world—it will necessarily be a matter of time to make the arrangement which Mr Lumby suggests; and Gerard is probably quite absorbed in business, and is waiting until he can lay everything before you.'

This explanation was so satisfactory to Miss Lucretia, that she dwelt upon it at considerable length, the fact that Lumby and Lumby's affairs were colossal appearing to afford her the warmest gratification. Constance was too glad to be left alone to interrupt her, and she followed the tangled threads of her own thought whilst the old lady expounded the advantages of being attached to an establishment which was colossal, or, as she added savingly, 'had been so described by one accustomed to the contemplation of large affairs, and not prone to use the language of exaggeration.' So attractive did this theme prove, that Constance escaped all further questioning that night, and made such strenuous efforts to be cheerful, that they resulted in a real headache, which kept her in bed until evening next day, and brought the doctor again. Reginald, calling, encountered the doctor, and asked him what was the matter. The doctor responded in a round-about way, as doctors sometimes will; but he said enough to make it clear that the case was one for which some suppressed excitement was most probably answerable.

'You had best come no more to Jotunheim, Mr Strange!' said young Jolly to himself as he walked away sorrowfully. 'You have done mischief enough already, Val—mischief enough already. Girls are a sad trouble! I shall be glad to see her safely married to Lumby.' Reginald felt a considerable sense of responsibility in this matter, comfortably mingled with a feeling of diplomatic triumph. He it was who had discovered the hitch in affairs and had banished Strange. He felt proud of his own discernment and of the spirit and judgment he had displayed. 'Constance will be getting married in a couple of months or so,' he told himself, 'and Strange will have the good sense to stay away for at least that time. And then Val's such a butterfly fellow! He feels all this very keenly, no doubt; but he'll forget all about it, and as likely as not bring back a gold-coloured bride from the West Indies.' Comforted by these reflections, he walked on

briskly. The shops were lighted up, and the evening sky was clear. The air even in London had a prophetic sense of spring in it. Where do they come from, those wandering faint perfumed winds which sometimes, for a second merely, greet the sense of the wayfarer in London streets, and how do they keep their perfume in their journey through the city's unnamed odours? Reginald was a lover of the town rather than the country, yet the countrified scent greeting his nostrils as it passed, sent him on his way well pleased. Suddenly, in the Regent Street crowd one face flashed out on his, and was gone again. He turned and pursued it, but failed to overtake it. 'Surely that was Gerard!' he said to himself as he passed and cast an uncertain glance before and behind him. 'But what a face the fellow wore! He looked downright ghastly. I hope there's nothing the matter. All his people were well enough. The pace he was going too! Staring straight before him, and plunging on like a madman.' A minute later he smiled, and shook his head with a knowing air. 'Love's a curious fever. He was going up to Chesterfield Street, and had heard that Constance was unwell. I'm getting quite knowing about the tender passion. Wonder when my turn's coming.—No; nothing in your line to-day, Cupid. Call again.' Beguiling time with many naive reflections, he walked on, and near the top of the Haymarket found himself entangled with a small boy who made proffer of an evening paper.

'O'ny a 'a'p'ny,' said the small boy appealingly, shivering before him as he walked on. 'Terrible disaster at sea, sir. Orful failure in the City. O'ny a 'a'p'ny!' The words 'failure in the City' struck curiously upon his ear, and Gerard's face, seen ten minutes before in Regent Street, came back to him in ridiculous association. He bought a paper chiefly to dispel that absurd fancy, and unfolded it near a tobacconist's window. There he read in large letters, 'Great City Failure.' The words 'Lumby and Lumby' followed in some connection, but everything had suddenly grown misty, and he could not see. He stood with a chill sickness creeping over him until his sight cleared again, and then read on. 'This afternoon, Messrs Lumby and Lumby, the well-known merchants of Gresham Street, suspended payment. The liabilities of the firm are estimated at half a million.' The street seemed to whirl, and he could not think. He held the rod of the tobacconist's shop-blind for a minute, and then, with uncertain step, went on again. Nothing was clear to him, within or without. The lights in the shops were hazy, like his thoughts; but out of the fog which seemed to have fallen on the streets came the face of his friend as he had seen it but a while ago, white and haggard and desperate. He could read its meaning now.

SADDELL AND ITS LEGENDS.

BY GUTHBERT BEDD.

THERE are still some parts of our country that are beyond the reach of railroads, and are out of the beaten track, and which, therefore, are not much visited, except by those who go thither chiefly for the purposes of sport. One such tract of country comprises the whole of the south-western Highlands of Scotland, south of

Oban, the 'Charing-Cross of the Highlands.' Throughout Argyllshire there is no railroad. MacCallum More's territory and the Land of Lorn are not invaded by parliamentary and excursion trains. The country of Ossian and of the children of the mist knows not the roaring and panting of the iron-horse as he drags his carriages past mountain and loch. It is true that hundreds of tourists annually cross the northern neck of Argyllshire by the Crinan Canal; but that is a voyage by water, and they only get a glimpse of a small portion of the wild scenery of this most picturesque county. To get a sight of its southern portion—especially of the long peninsula of 'wild Cantire,' as Sir Walter Scott calls it—the traveller must take the long steamboat voyage from Greenock down the Clyde, round by Arran, and through Kilbrannan Sound, to Campbeltown; whence he must get to his destination, or shooting-quarters, as best he may.

Sailing down Kilbrannan Sound, with the rugged peaks of Arran on our left, and on our right the bold range of Beinn-an-tuirc—the 'Wild-boar's Mountain,' and the scene of the death of Diarmid, the Fingalian Achilles—we come within eight miles of Davar Island and the entrance to Campbeltown harbour. Here, on the Cantire shore, and close to the water, we see a massive quadrangular castle, backed up by woods and hills, and in excellent preservation. This is Saddell Castle. It stands near a river which flows through Glen Saddell; and in the hollow of the Glen, close by the river, and surrounded with trees, is the once-famous Monastery of Saddell, now a mere ruin.

Legends gather around Saddell, like the moss and lichens on the remaining stones of its Monastery; and these traditional tales, or *Sgeulachdan*, are told in the native Gaelic, on many a winter's night, around the peat-fire in the black-roofed heather-thatched hut, while the men and women knit and listen to the stories with an absorbing interest and rapt attention that could scarcely be realised by the average Englishman who reads his *Times* and subscribes to Mudie's. It is with these legends that I would chiefly deal.

The very name of Saddell may be said to come down to us clothed with legendary lore. There is a tradition concerning the building of the Monastery. A certain person having murdered his step-father, was constantly haunted by the ghost of the murdered man, and could gain no rest or peace of mind. He therefore travelled to Rome, in order to confess his sin to the Pope, who ordered him to return to Cantire, and there build a church between two hills and two waters; after which his troubled mind would be relieved. He made choice of Saddell, which fulfilled the conditions imposed upon him for the site; and there he built the famous Monastery. This tradition may perhaps have arisen from what is told of Donald, grandson of Somerled; how he went to Rome to obtain absolution for his sins, and on his return gave rich gifts to Saddell Monastery. Another tradition says that the founder sent to Rome for some consecrated dust, and made the building commensurate with the extent to which the dust could be spread.

This founder was 'the mighty Somerled'—who is mentioned in Scott's *Lord of the Isles*—Thane of Argyll, and Lord of Cantire and the Isles. He was slain in fight in the year 1163, and was buried in the unfinished Monastery, which was completed by his son Reginald, who, in addition to his other titles, assumed that of King. The Monastery was designed for the Cistercian or Grayfriar order of monks. In the Norwegian expedition, in 1260, against Alexander III., when Haco was at Gudey ('God's-isle'), now called Gigha, in the Atlantic, off the western shore of Cantire, it is told that an abbot of a monastery of Grayfriars waited upon him, and begged protection for their dwelling and church; which the king granted to him in writing; and not only so, but, when one of his own monks, Friar Simon, died in Gudey, they carried his body across the water to the peninsula of Cantire, and crossing its mountain-range, bore the corpse to the eastern shore, where the Grayfriars buried it in their church at Saddell, and spreading a fringed pall over his grave, dubbed him a saint.

The plan of Saddell Monastery took the form of a cross, lying in an exact position towards the four cardinal points. Its length from east to west was one hundred and thirty-six by twenty-four feet; and of the transepts, from north to south, seventy-eight by twenty-four feet. Part of the gable of the transept, and the aperture for a window in that wall, remain; but the dressed stonework of the windows has all been taken away, with the exception of a single stone near the spring of the arch, which has a moulding of fourteenth-century work. The monumental memorials are numerous and interesting; for distinguished persons from all parts of the country had their sepulchres here, including some of the collateral branches of the Macdonald clan. The tomb that is pointed out as that of the mighty Somerled, is in the choir, and appears to have been originally placed within the arched recess, or *fundera* tomb, in the south wall of the choir, near to which it now lies; and this supposition is probably correct. If so, the sculptured effigy of this redoubtable Lord of Argyll and the Isles represents him as wearing a high-pointed, conical bascinet, from which the camail, or tippet of mail, is dependent over the neck and shoulders. The body is clad down to the knees, with the shirt or jupon, which is scored down with straight lines to represent the folds. The right hand is raised up to the shoulder; the left clasps the long two-handed sword. In the corner of the slab, above the right hand, was an inscription, now defaced and illegible.

Another tombstone, bearing the figure of a warrior, is said to be that of Mackay, to whom Robert Bruce assigned the lands of Ugadale and Arnicle, in Cantire, for giving him shelter when he was a fugitive. Bruce had wandered to Mackay's farmhouse, where he was entertaining some friends, and at first declined the hospitality; but Mackay compelled him to accept it, saying: 'I am king in my own house.' The next morning, after breakfast, Mackay took Bruce to the top of the mountain of Beinn-an-tuirc, to show him the western coast, whither Bruce wished to go. Bruce then disclosed himself, and said he would give Mackay what he wished, when he had

regained his throne. Mackay asked for the two farms of Ugadale and Arnicle; and they separated at the spot now marked by a stone called *Crois Mhic Caidh*, or the Cross of Mackay. After the battle of Bannockburn, Mackay went to Edinburgh, where the king gave him the title-deeds of the two farms; and when Mackay declined the goblet of wine that he offered him, Bruce in his turn said: 'You must drink it; for I am now king in my own house.'

There is also the grave of Archibald Campbell of Carradale, who was killed at the battle of Inverlochy, while engaged with the forces of Montrose. Here, too, lie Macdonalds and other distinguished men, whose graves cannot now be discerned from those humble mounds beneath which 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.'

The West Highland funerals were attended by a great concourse of people, and unseemly scenes not unfrequently occurred on these occasions, arising out of the jealousies and hot blood of hostile clans. I was told that early in the last century, when a funeral was being held in this graveyard, one of the proprietors of Cantire, pointing to the grave of the great Macdonald, exclaimed: 'There lies the bloody dog!' Upon this, the Macdonalds who were present drew their weapons, and would have slain the gentleman, had not his servant protected him and got him on his horse, when he galloped away for his life.

On a bank on the other side of the river is the Holy Well, almost concealed by long grass and coronals of fern. The water flows into a small stone basin, on the front of which remains a sculptured cross, the only one belonging to the conventual buildings that has escaped destruction. It is placed in a scene of singular beauty, and possesses the customary Holy Well legend—that those who drink of its waters should wish a wish, and will be married to their hearts' desire before another twelvemonth has passed over their heads. But two peasant maidens whom we saw there, were too young for any such flights of fancy, and had merely come to the Holy Well for the prosaic duty—made poetical by place or circumstances—of filling their pitchers with the clear spring water. As yet, they walked in maiden meditation, fancy free of any bridal of Saddell that might hereafter be their lot.

It is said of Reginald, who completed the building of Saddell Monastery, that, in conformity with a practice among the Scandinavian sea-kings, he did not enter under the roof of any house wherein a fire was kindled, for the space of three years; and he thus accustomed himself to hardships and privation. The rents of the Macdonalds of Saddell, as was then the universal custom in Scotland, were chiefly paid in kind—meat, meal, malt, cheese, poultry, &c.; so that, in the year 1542, the monetary rent-roll of Macdonald of Saddell, Lord of Cantire, and also Lord of Islay and Rheinds, barely amounted to one hundred and forty pounds sterling. But the Macdonalds were very generous, and would occasionally reward one who gave them a night's lodging with the grant of a farm; indeed, that of Coul, in Islay, was granted to a man who had given a flounder to a Macdonald who was much exhausted. These grants were models of brevity, as may be seen from two specimens: 'I, Donald, chief of the Macdonalds, give here in my castle to Mackay,

a right to Kilmahumay, from this day till to-morrow, and so on for ever.'—I, Donald, sitting upon Dundonald, give you a right to your farm, from this day till to-morrow, and every day thereafter, so long as you have food for the great Macdonald of the Isles.' Dundonald was the castle near to Campbelton, on the western coast, where Macdonald went to receive his rents; and the cliff close to it is called 'The Hangman's Rock,' where, perhaps, short treatment was made of those who were behind-hand in their payments; for some of the Macdonalds of Saddell were very rough and ready in their ways—that one, for example, who used to watch from his battlements, and take 'pot-shots' at any passer-by, using a gun that he called 'the Cuckoo.' This chieftain, who was known as Rìgh Fiongal, went to Ireland, and, by force, brought back the wife of another man, who followed him; but who was imprisoned by Macdonald in Saddell, with the intent of starving him. First, he was shut up in a barn; but he sustained life by eating some grain. Then he was moved to another out-building, where a generous hen laid an egg for him daily. Then he was put in the dungeon of the castle, and died, after gnawing his arm and hand. Macdonald gave him a funeral, and told the widow what had happened; but she leaped from the battlements, and was buried with her husband. Then three Irish friends came over, and were hospitably received by him; but when he found them asleep in his barn side by side, with their necks convenient for his long sword, he cut off their three heads with one swishing blow. He then invited McLean and the chiefs of his clan to enjoy his hospitality at Saddell, and cement the peace that had just been made between the two clans. But he thrust them all into dungeons, and each morning, after breakfast, cut off the head of one of them. The king of Scotland heard of this, and interfered in time to save the necks of a few of the Macleans, by ordering Macdonald to come before him at Ceann Loeh—as Campbelton was then called. He obeyed the order, and swore allegiance to the king; but before his monarch had sailed out of sight of land, Macdonald hoisted a flag of defiance.

One story is told in connection with Saddell Monastery, of the love and heroism of a young girl who was servant to a farmer in Barr Glen, which is on the other side of the mountain of Beinn-an-tuire, and about seven miles from Saddell. This girl was loved by the farmer's son; but his father disapproved of their courtship; and with a base scheme to get rid of her, told her that he would give his consent to the wedding, if she, on that dark, tempestuous, snowy winter's night, would walk across the hills to Saddell and bring from the old monastery a skull that lay on the founder's tomb. She consented, and went out alone on her perilous journey; and in the morning, returned half dead with fatigue and excitement, but with the skull in her hands. The old farmer would not believe the tale that she told concerning the skull, or that she had brought it from the Monastery. She said that when she had at last got to the old church, she found its door open; that she groped her way in—well knowing the spot and the position of the tomb—and that

she heard mysterious moans, and the movement of many light feet and forms all around her. Terrified, but not disheartened, she made her way in the darkness to the old tomb, felt for the skull, seized it, and carried it away, pursued by the invisible forms to the church door, which she passed through and closed behind her, hearing, as she did so, a rush made against it. How she got back through the snow to Glen Barr, she scarcely knew; but she accomplished the task; and there she was with the skull in her hand, to claim her reward. Still, the old farmer would not believe her; and set out to Saddell with some of his men, expecting to find the skull in its usual place. But when they got to the old church and opened the door, there, within the building, were a number of deer, who had probably sought shelter from the violence of the winter-storm, and whose startled movements were what the brave girl had heard. And as there was no skull on the tomb, the old farmer was compelled to return home and give his consent to the girl's marriage to his son. They took back the skull to its former resting-place, and were married; and some of the deer were killed and cooked, and they had venison for the wedding-feast.

Macdonald of Saddell was crowned King of the Isles in the chapel of St Columba, on a small island in Loch Finlagan, Islay, where also was a castle, and a harbour with piers and gates to secure the shipping. He stood to be crowned on a large stone seven feet square, and received the sword and white wand of power. Five hundred chosen men formed his body-guard, and out of these there were sixteen picked men to attend him. It is said that a man of great strength, named Macphail, was splitting an oak-tree, when Macdonald approached with his sixteen attendants. Macphail appealed to them to lend him a helping hand; whereupon eight of them took hold of the split on the one side, and eight on the other. Then Macphail suddenly took out the wedges, and the two sides of the oak sprung together and imprisoned the thirty-two hands. Macphail, according to the legend, permitted Macdonald to go away; but he cut off the heads of the sixteen attendants with his axe.

The chief portion of the old castle of Saddell is a square-built tower, measuring in width about seventeen yards by ten, with a height of about fifty feet. The walls are of great thickness, and are without buttresses; but the summit is embattled and machicolated, with projecting turrets—also machicolated—at the four corners, and a fifth nearly over the chief entrance on the western side. The lower part of the castle has two barrel-vaulted rooms, pierced exteriorly with narrow arrow-slits; and above these is the principal apartment, having at its north end an arched fireplace ten feet in width. Higher still, are two other floors of rooms, reached by a winding staircase, which is continued to the embattled parapet. The castle was inhabited by the Campbells until the latter part of the last century, when the House was built on the other side of the river, on a somewhat bleak spot, but commanding fine views of the shores of Cantire and Argyll, and of the distant ocean.

On the small island of Freughleil, in the

Sound of Islay, was another castle, that of Claig, where the Macdonalds kept their prisoners; and another small island was called the Island of Council, where the thirteen judges sat and decided the frequent disputes among Macdonald's subjects.

An angry threat used in Cantire was, 'Dog on you!' or 'Dog and eat on you!' and it is said to have had its rise in the days when the Macdonalds used bloodhounds to hunt escaped prisoners. Wild-cats, according to the Rev. John Macfarlane of Saddell, might be met in the wooded glens at Saddell as late as the year 1843. I was told a story by an aged native of Cantire that bears upon this. 'In the year 1689,' he said, 'my great-grandfather, MacNiven, joined the Scottish Regiment at the age of eighteen, and was sent to Londonderry, which city was then lying under siege by King James II. The sufferings of the people inside the walls were terrible, and many of them perished from hunger. But although the old man my ancestor was upwards of eighty years old when he died, and had many tales to tell of that dreadful siege, and of his many adventures and fightings, yet he always said that he had never felt half so much terror in the thickest of the fiercest battle, as he had felt in combating with a wild-cat. It was on his return to Cantire from the wars, after King James had been defeated by the Prince of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne, and he had got as far on his way home as Alt-na-beiste—"the Glen of the Wild Beast"—at Saddell, and had reached the stream, which in those days was not bridged over; but there were large stepping-stones placed in the river for the use of the people in crossing. Well, he had stepped upon the first stone, when a very large wild-cat leaped out of a thicket on the opposite bank, and stood upon a stone on the other side of the stream, fully prepared to dispute the passage. The soldier also prepared himself for the combat by rolling his plaid around his neck and taking his dagger in his hand. The cat watched his movements with glaring eyes; and as MacNiven could not safely retreat, he resolved to advance. This he did, cautiously stepping from one stone to another, in order to secure a firm foothold, if the cat should spring upon him; and he kept his dagger ready to strike. He had hoped to thrust the creature through at the first blow; but quick as he was, the cat was quicker, and sprang upon him so suddenly and with such force, that he lost his balance and fell into the stream, with the wild-cat fastened on his neck. It was well for MacNiven that he had taken the precaution to wrap his plaid there, or the creature's bite might have been fatal. It never loosened its hold as they toppled over into the stream; and as they rose to the surface, it made a dash with its sharp claws at the soldier's eyes. MacNiven received it upon his left arm, and immediately thrust his dagger into the wild-cat's body. The stream was rapid, and reached to his chest, and it was with much difficulty that he could stand firmly on the rocky channel. He tried to hold the cat under the water, but could not succeed; and although he wounded it more than once, yet it contrived to keep its hold about his neck and shoulders, fighting fiercely at him with its sharp teeth and talons, and uttering the most terrific cries. The fight was as fierce as it was prolonged; but at

last it was over, and ended in favour of the soldier. He brought its body home, and had its skin preserved. It was as large as a biggish dog; and I have often seen it, and heard my father tell the tale that has been handed down in our family, how MacNiven's direst enemy in battle had been a wild-cat.'

THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

ANTOINE, having, as already mentioned, remained at home for some months after his marriage, at length sailed once more on the long fishing-ermise to the North Sea, which usually occupied a period of six months.

At this period the terrible war between France and Prussia was raging furiously. Paris was already threatened with siege, and the Germans were everywhere victorious. But of all the communities in France, the fisher-folk least troubled themselves with political affairs. Not that they were unpatriotic, for they heartily wished success to the cause and arms of France; but the French fishermen enjoy immunity from the military conscription—to which all other classes of the people, save the clergy, are more or less subject—on consideration of their being bound to enroll themselves in the national navy whenever their services are required.

So long as Antoine remained at home, Lucien had held himself aloof from Madeleine, who believed that, now she was married, he would cease to annoy her. She did not, therefore, think it worth while to cause uneasiness to her husband by acquainting him with the young man's previous ill conduct towards her. But no sooner had Antoine gone to sea, than Lucien recommenced his insulting importunities. He endeavoured to gain her favour by means of costly presents; but his presents were scornfully rejected, and he was plainly assured that if he did not forthwith cease his annoyances, she would take such measures to put an end to them as would give him cause for regret for the remainder of his life.

Thus compelled to desist from his persecutions and to relinquish his base designs, Lucien became more determined than ever upon revenge; and though he could conceive of no scheme at present by means of which he could carry his craving for vengeance into effect, he resolved to wait and watch his opportunity. 'Everything comes to him who has the patience to wait,' he muttered to himself as he returned, raging with disappointment, to Paris.

But then came the siege, and for months he was imprisoned within the ramparts of the city, and Madeleine hoped and believed that she had rid herself of him for ever. At length the siege was raised. The Prussians marched in triumph into Paris, and the war came to an end. The Imperial power was overthrown; a Republic was proclaimed; and the vile mob and *canaille* of Paris sought to establish the power of the Commune, and succeeded for a while in maintaining a second Reign of Terror, during which pillage and murder were rife, and destruction was wrought upon many of the public buildings that

the Prussian guns had spared. But though the headquarters of the Commune were in Paris, it had its supporters in other places, and especially in the towns situated on the banks of the Seine, between Paris and Havre de Grâce. In all these places its emissaries were active in seeking to persuade the poor, debased, and ignorant among the population to join its ranks.

And now Lucien Pierrot was again seen in Honfleur. He had at length worn out the patience of his father, whose eyes had become opened to his son's delinquencies, and, for the time being, the young man was paternally discarded. It was said that, out of spite, to annoy his father and gratify his own evil propensities, Lucien had leagued himself with the Commune, and had become one of the most active among its minor leaders. At all events, he was constantly to be found busily disseminating its atrocious doctrines; but persons who professed to be better informed in the matter than others, declared that Lucien Pierrot was in reality a paid government spy.

It was at this period that Antoine again came home from sea. He had been absent longer than usual, but had made a profitable voyage to various ports in his own lugger. Moreover, shortly before her husband's return, Madeleine had given birth to a son, which delighted the heart of the worthy young sailor. Little did he or the people of his native village trouble themselves about the Commune; probably few among them knew the meaning of the word; and so long as they were healthy and prosperous, it concerned them little whether France was an Empire or a Republic.

On the first day of his return, Antoine was seated, in the evening, opposite his happy young wife—now so proud of her maternity—in their snug little cottage, with the infant sleeping quietly in his cradle between them. Antoine had related the events of his voyage, and Madeleine was acquainting her husband with all that had occurred in the village during his absence, when suddenly rising from her chair, she approached a *buffet*, and took from a drawer a letter bearing the Paris postmark, which she presented to her husband. 'In my joy at seeing thee again at home, my Antoine,' she said, smiling, 'I had well nigh forgotten this letter, which I received a fortnight ago.'

Antoine took the letter from his wife's hand. It was rather a strange and suspicious-looking document—so at least thought the young fisherman. It was weighty, and bore a huge red seal, which was unbroken.

'Thou hast not opened it, my Madeleine,' said Antoine, who had rarely before in the course of his life had a letter addressed to him, and who looked upon it with something like alarm in the expression of his countenance.

'Nay, my husband. It is directed to thee,' said Madeleine. 'I had no right to open it without thy permission.'

'But thou knowest I cannot read,' said Antoine. This was true; the young fisher-lads had to work from so early an age that few of them could read or write. The girls were, as before remarked, better educated.

'If thou wilt, I will read it for thee,' Madeleine replied.

The portentous seal was broken, and when the

letter was unfolded, a piece of folded parchment fell from it on to the table.

Madeleine proceeded to read the letter aloud. It was nothing very alarming after all. It was written by an *avocat* in Paris, who informed Antoine, that through the decease of one Marie Lupin, at the advanced age of eighty-nine, he had inherited the sum of fifteen thousand francs, bequeathed by will to her grand-nephew Antoine Duroc, by the aforesaid Marie Lupin; and that it was desirable that he, Antoine Duroc, should come to Paris at an early day to receive the money, which was in the hands of the *avocat*.

'Fifteen thousand francs! It is quite a fortune, my husband,' cried Madeleine, laying the letter aside, and opening and reading the inclosure, which was merely a copy of the will. 'Our little Antoine will some day be a rich man,' she added, glancing lovingly at the sleeping infant.

'Marie Lupin!' exclaimed Antoine. 'It must be my old aunt Marie, whom I have never seen in my life! It is strange that she should leave me anything. Only think, my Madeleine, fifteen thousand francs!'

'But must thou go to Paris, Antoine, and thou but just returned to me?'

'I will occupy but a few days, ma petite,' replied Antoine, who had never visited Paris, and though loath to leave his young wife even for a day, was pleased with the idea of seeing the great city.

'But just now, Antoine, when 'tis said there is such dreadful trouble in Paris?'

'It will not concern me, Madeleine. I shall return to thee as soon as I have received the legacy.'

Madeleine was much troubled; but it appeared necessary that her husband should do as the *avocat* requested, and she thought it would be wrong on her part to object to Antoine's undertaking the journey.

Two or three days afterwards, the cargo having been discharged from the lugger, and sold by auction in the fish-market, and the vessel having been left in charge of the mate, Antoine set forth for Paris by railroad, his wife, up to the moment of his departure, entreating him to take great care of himself, and to hasten back to her as soon as possible.

By this time the Commune had nearly run its destructive course. The newly established Republican government, with M. Thiers at its head, had been terribly frightened at the excesses of the Communists, and had resorted to dreadfully severe measures for their suppression. To be suspected was to be denounced and condemned; the government spies were active, and it was said that many innocent persons were punished along with the guilty. Lucien Pierrot, who had been on a visit to Honfleur, chanced to return to Paris on the same day on which Antoine took his seat in a railway carriage for the first time in his life—Lucien travelling by the same train. Unobserved by either, he had witnessed the parting between Madeleine and her husband, and wondered greatly what was the object of the young fisherman's visit to the capital.

To Antoine, Lucien was a perfect stranger; but Lucien would have recognised the features of the young fisherman even if he had not

witnessed the parting scene between the husband and wife. Burning with a desire for revenge, he resolved to keep watch over the young man on his arrival in Paris, and if any opportunity for wreaking vengeance upon him should present itself, to take advantage thereof.

The train duly arrived at Paris; and the two young men passed out of the *dépot*, Lucien following close behind Antoine. He observed the young fisherman apparently asking directions, as a stranger, from several persons whom he met; and saw him, after he had wandered about for some time, looking around him with the wondering air of a provincial who has visited a great capital for the first time. Finally he tracked him to the *bureau* of an *avocat* in the Rue du Faubourg St-Antoine. Wondering more than ever what could have brought the young fisherman thither, Lucien remained on the watch till Antoine, in the course of half an hour, reappeared, accompanied by a clerk, who conducted him to a small hotel near by, to which he had been recommended by the *avocat*.

It was already late in the day; and believing that the object of his animosity was safely housed for the night, Lucien left the spot and went about his own affairs; but at an early hour next morning he stood opposite the hotel, and waited for the unsuspecting Antoine. Nor had he long to wait, for presently the young fisherman sallied forth, and proceeded direct to the *bureau*, which he shortly afterwards left, apparently well satisfied with the result of his second interview with the lawyer.

Anxious as was Antoine to return home to his wife and child, he would have been something more than mortal if he could have resisted the temptation to look around him in the great capital which he had now visited for the first time. He decided to spend the day in roaming about the city and looking at the grand shops, which displayed treasures such as he had never imagined to exist in the world, and in purchasing some trifling presents for Madeleine and his little Antoine, ere setting forth on his return to Honfleur early the next morning.

ECONOMICAL DECORATION.

BY THE 'MOTHER OF A FAMILY.'

IN my former paper on the subject of household decoration which appeared in this *Journal* (No. 904), I endeavoured to give a few practical hints as to the rejuvenating of old and shabby furniture, and the manufacturing out of trifling materials some of those minor articles of ornament which are certainly not indispensable to the comfort of a room, while they add considerably to its appearance and artistic effect. Since writing that paper, I have been fortunate in one or two further efforts in the ornamental decoration of my drawing-room; and as all has been done in the leisure-time of a 'mother' who has three active little boys to make, mend, and knit for, I trust that many of the young people who sigh enviously for pretty things, and bemoan their hard lot in not having money enough to purchase them, may be induced to try and make for themselves, at very little cost or trouble, many of the dainty trifles which they covet.

Nearly every household in this æsthetic age possesses at least one member who can paint a little in oil-colours. One day the idea occurred to me that, instead of the difficult, troublesome, and expensive process of china or enamel painting, it might be fairly successful if oils were tried for the same purpose. I at once experimented on a pair of ordinary white-ware dinner-plates. On one I painted a large blue iris, on the other a branch of vivid scarlet hollyhocks. They were a great success; so I painted several others in the same way, choosing large bold flowers for my subjects. I also painted a pair of oblong breakfast dishes, with rocks, dashing spray, and a boat or two in the distance. The margin of those dishes I carefully painted over with gold ink, giving them three coats; and now those common-ware dishes form prominent ornaments on the top shelf of the over-mantel, which is described afterwards. On the rims of the plates I glued dark ruby velvet, which was cut to fit them accurately, and after being wired, they now hang on the walls; and no one suspects their lowly origin.

After so triumphant a sequel to my trials, I naturally became more ambitious, and bought several proper *plaques*, on which I painted either a pretty landscape without much detail, or a bit of sea scenery. I have been lucky enough to meet with a joiner who enters into my decorative ideas with great shrewdness; and he, for a very small sum, made circular wooden frames, which I covered with velvet; then fastened the *plaques* securely into their new receptacle by means of pieces of wood glued on, or small nails hammered into the wood so as to retain the plate in its proper position; while a circular piece of brown paper glued over the back forms a discreet cover to the workmanship. An ordinary picture-ring screwed into the frame suffices to hang it up; and thus is formed a handsome ornament, and tangible proof that money is not always requisite to produce what is gratifying to our love of the beautiful. I may say that I use ordinary boiled linseed oil—two-pennyworth from any chemist's will last for months—or copal varnish—one shilling per bottle at any oil-colour shop—as medium for *plaque*-painting; and when once dry, thoroughly dry, they may be washed with perfect safety with warm water and a sponge. Vandyke brown is a slow drier; but a little sugar-of-lead, a very few drops added to the medium, will be found to dry much more quickly.

As few people have either time, means, or patience to expend on enamel-colouring, to them I commend oil-painting on china. Each frame requires half a yard of velvet or velveteen; the wood must be laid on the velvet, which is cut three or four inches larger, in order to allow for covering the sides and on to the back; a circular piece is then cut out rather smaller than the frame, to enable the 'rabbit,' or interior edge of the frame, to be deftly concealed. I cannot here enter into any further minute details as to the home manufacture of *plaques* and their frames; suffice it to say that ordinary glue, not too thick, must be applied to a thoroughly warmed wood; then a free use of a pair of sharp scissors here and there at the sides and back, prevents any unseemly crinkling. The front is necessarily perfectly smooth, and easily laid on.

Any coloured velvet may be chosen; but ruby or dark claret forms the most effective background, provided it be in harmony with other colours in the room. The velvet left from frames makes capital pincushions, trimmed with lace, fringe, or gimp, as fancy dictates; and my clever coadjutor the joiner made me half-a-dozen small wooden brackets, with a shield above the tiny shelf. These I covered entirely with pieces of left-off velvet, screwed a picture-ring into the top, hung them on nails, and placed a rare old china cup and saucer on each shelf; and very well they look. The wooden brackets cost but a few pence each, for surely every housekeeper has an old box to spare. The tasteful appearance of the walls well repays any outlay of time or patience to produce those simple designs. Individual taste will readily suggest a large variety of patterns for such brackets; but they must each have a shield or top as high *above* the shelf as the bracket goes *below* it, or the china loses all its effect.

At each side of the fireplace in the room where all those decorative fancies are displayed, are two ugly recesses. I resolved to improve upon them. I found a long piece of wood, which was sawn in two, for shelves; a ledge of black and gold picture-frame beading was fastened on the outer edge of each narrow shelf; the shelves were securely fastened one into each corner by means of a small wooden bracket, which I painted over with ivory black. Thus two neat useful shelves were contrived at very small cost. I soon painted a row of plates for each shelf; and as the wall-paper did not form an harmonious background, a strip of never-fading velvet, rounded at the top, to form a graceful background to each plate, and to prevent an ugly straight line, was hammered on with ornamental brass-headed tacks, which may be had at any ironmonger's shop for threepence per dozen; and now my ugly recesses look quite beautified. A little table in each recess looks inviting, with a small bunch of flowers or an album placed thereon.

For some considerable time I was an ardent admirer of the 'over-mantels' or 'mantel cupboard' which are so much in vogue nowadays, in place of the old-fashioned mirrors, which in former days occupied the post of honour over the chimney-piece. For long I was content to admire; then the idea crept into my head that surely the manufacture of such an article could not be attended with insurmountable difficulties. The thought of purchasing such a thing did flash across my mind; but the large prices asked for them quite deterred me from putting that project into execution; so I must either continue to admire at a distance, or try to make a 'mantel cupboard' for myself. And this I resolved to do.

A large packing-case was called into requisition to provide the necessary material. It would be out of place were I to enter into details of the manufacture of the much-coveted piece of furniture; suffice it to say that with the aid of a friend who is clever at cabinet and joinery work, a most desirable result was obtained; and I am now the happy possessor of an elegant, artistic, black-and-gold cupboard, which occupies the entire length of the drawing-room chimney-piece, is four feet nine inches high at the centre, has two small

cupboards filled with old china at each side, each cupboard ornamented with two beautifully turned pillars. About eight inches from the top of the centre-piece, a narrow black-and-gold beading—bought at a picture-framer's shop—is carried along; and five or six inches underneath the beading is placed a shelf, in order to relieve the monotony of the large black board which economy compelled me to substitute for the mirror which generally forms the centre of the cupboard. 'Black Japan' once more came to the front, and two coats of that served to cover the wood with a brilliant black surface, which formed a capital foundation for gold-ink designs. The cupboards are open, so there was plenty of scope for artistic proclivities. Ferns, leaves, and conventional figures were the subjects chosen; and when I look at the cupboard, and consider how very small was the outlay of time and money expended on it, I can hardly believe my own eyes. The most expensive item, comparatively, was the turning of the pillars; the turner charged three and sixpence for doing the eight, but they form prominent ornaments to the cupboard.

I had some finely worked strips of silk canvas. Originally they were a pair of 'braces,' but the kid ends wore out, and what to do with the work, which was perfectly clean and fresh, was the next question. With the help of three broad bands of sage-green velvet, cord and tassels to match, a handsome cushion was speedily contrived; but the two short pieces left off were a source of annoyance for a long time, till one day the thought of transforming them into 'bannerets' occurred to me. The price asked by Berlin-wool shopkeepers for banneret-stands far exceeded my limited purse. Suddenly I thought that a rustic stand formed of twigs would be unique, artistic, and, best of all, cost nothing; so I took my boys for a country walk, and we soon had twigs enough and to spare. Two substantial pieces of branch the size required were bound firmly into the shape of a cross; and on the top of the cross I fastened several small pieces of twig, to look as careless as possible. Apple-tree twigs are far the most suitable for such a purpose; they are so like 'antlers,' which is the best effect to produce. I glued the crosses each into a round foot which came off an old ottoman, and then painted stands and twigs with the inevitable 'Black Japan.' The strips of embroidery were too narrow, so I crocheted several rows of sage-green silk on each side of the work, painted some stiff cardboard green, tacked the work firmly on to that for a foundation, and then sewed it on to the stand. My bannerets have been so much admired, that several have done me the honour of copying the idea, which is a sure proof that it is a success. Any scraps of work or old lace may be utilised in this way, and our homes brightened and beautified by exercising a little of the skill and ingenuity which every woman possesses.

I had a large supply of twigs left from my design, so I made a firescreen somewhat resembling the shields and Japanese umbrellas so much used last summer. In the first place, I borrowed my eldest son's 'hoop,' a good-sized iron one. Economically the idea was good; but that talkative young gentleman has made me blush rosy

red on several occasions by informing my visitors that 'Mother made my hoop into that bird's nest.' I covered the hoop with a coarse brown wrapper, bought at a draper's shop for a few pence, then scattered the twigs all over. I tacked them on with twine, to keep them in their places, and made an imitation nest of cotton-wool and feathers, which I carefully ghied on in the centre of the screen. Our hens at this juncture kindly laid two or three very tiny eggs, which were brought to me in triumph by busy little fingers, and completed our screen by becoming the inmates of the nest. It is a most useful ornament; for as we always have a 'cold' fire laid, the screen can be removed in a moment; when by the application of a match, a cheerful fire speedily diffuses a warmth and ruddy glow, very acceptable in this fickle climate of ours.

For some time I have had a vague idea floating in my head as to door-panels; but my space for the nonce is quite exhausted, and all further talks about economical decoration must be deferred. My end will have been amply achieved if I have induced any one to try for herself how very readily the simplest materials may be utilised to form articles tasteful and pleasing for one's home and family. Truly, there are trials and sorrows enough in the world, and if we can add to its pleasures and gratifications, is it not worth one's while to try?

A PILGRIMAGE TO CHEOPS' TOMB.

THE re-awakening of a general interest in Egypt, occasioned by M. Maspero's great discovery at Thebes, in conjunction with the recent unfortunate disturbances that have taken place, may serve as apology for adding anything, however small, to the already voluminous literature on the country of the Nile. We shall endeavour to give an account of a day's drive, under the glorious blue of an Egyptian winter sky, to the monuments that stand on the limestone platform of Gizeh.

We have had our first peep at the Pyramids from the walls of the Citadel of Cairo; and have had the same sensations that every traveller experiences when he looks for the first time across the dirty and odorous city to the narrow strip of green, bright with early-springing corn, which constitutes arable Egypt; and beyond this to the dreary sand-waste, where the eye rests upon the pyramids that loom out of the far haze of the Libyan Desert. In order to have a nearer view of these monumental antiquities, we left Cairo in the early morning of a brilliant day, sweeping out in carriage and pair, with *safs* or runner in cleanest of linen garments and richest of embroidered vests, to warn the unwary foot-passenger out of the path of our august progress; over the iron bridge, and along the road which was constructed for the convenience of our Prince and Princess of Wales when they paid their visit to the Pyramids. It is a shady road, with trees well and regularly planted, shutting out a portion of the hot sunshine. It is at times hard work for our poor horses; but the Egyptian driver does not spare the whip; and the wheels

drag heavily through the deep sand, which in places has drifted up over the road from the surrounding desert.

We have been pursued for over a mile by two lithe Arabs, who were picketed at an outpost, to obtain the earliest possible intelligence of the arrival of the legitimate prey of the desert—the Englishman. They are clean enough, these two men, their white linen tunics and trousers almost spotless; how they keep them so, does not appear, for their homes are no better than pigsties. They have been trying all the way along to do a little business in *curios* of suspicious genuineness, producing *scarabei* and *osirides* of undoubted Birmingham stamp from mysterious depths in their tunics, and pressing us to buy; but we are on our guard, and we mention the word 'Brunnagem,' which is quickly understood, though the innuendo is slyly deprecated by the grinning Arabs.

Our carriage is at length fast in the sand, so we are compelled to walk the few hundred yards that lie between us and the base of Cheops' great building. Our troubles now begin in real earnest. The birds are gathering thick around their prey. They are swooping down, the halt, the blind, and the lame, over that sandy hill, from the village which lies dirty, dog-infested, and sun-baked almost at the foot of the Big Pyramid. There are fully thirty Arabs about us now, clamouring, voluble and demonstrative, and 'the cry is 'still, they come.' One yells that he is the man to take us into the most hidden chamber, Cheops or any one else ever built—he is indeed ready for anything. Another shouts that he is prepared to run up and down as many pyramids as lie within reach in as many minutes as we choose to name. A constant amount of good-natured chaff goes on amongst themselves.—'Him not the right man, sar;' 'Him let you go, and you fall;' 'Him afraid to go up, sar'—and so on, and so on; this all screamed at the highest pitch of the shrill Arab voice; while beneath this upper stratum of uproar is an under-current, steady and ceaseless in its flow, of demands for *backsheesh*. A few days will serve to steel a very Wilberforce against the begging of the people. As a fact, from the moment of one's leaving one's hotel until one's return, the demand for charity never ceases. Money, money, money! We have heard from a group of little naked urchins, who sat far away from the public highway in the middle of a field, cries of 'Backsheesh, sheesh, backsheesh!' when there existed not the smallest probability of our stopping the carriage and satisfying their craving for coin; nor did they appear to expect that we should, for they remained sitting where they were, screaming to us from mere habit. Sir Gardner Wilkinson has suggested that this is merely the Egyptian's mode of wishing a 'good-day;' but we question whether any traveller will subscribe to this opinion after experience.

Another hundred yards, and the Pyramids tower dark and massive above us with their multitudinous steps, which fatigue the eye to count. Now, we are wading ankle-deep in sand, pushed and pulled hither and thither by a clamouring, bargain-driving mob of swarthy Arabs; and are half maddened by the heat of the fierce sun and the demands for backsheesh, till we long

to hit out, were it but to make a breach in the crowd to let in some air. We do our best to strike a bargain with some of the rabble; but it is useless. If we speak to one, another is certain to shout depreciatory remarks as to his ability to act as guide. If we settle upon an especial one to take us to the top of the pyramid, there is immediately an outcry. They are like so many children scrambling for scattered sweets. At length, to our intense disgust, we learn that they are incapable of acting on their own responsibility in the matter. We must await the arrival of the Sheikh, who is soon seen coming along as fast as his legs can carry him—a tall, lanky, grizzled old man, brandishing a stick and gesticulating wildly. There is a lull in the storm now; for his advent appears to fill his dependents with wholesome fear; and, moreover, he is not scrupulous about freely using his stick on their shoulders and bare shins. We are admitted to a parley with his Royal Highness, and conclude a treaty with him, under the terms of which he undertakes to provide us with two men to haul us up the pyramid, and one to assist us in the exploration of the interior, for the sum of four frames.

Before, however, we do either, we will take a general view of this grand monument and of its brethren, and try and understand, from what we have heard and read, how these structures were put together. First, let us know then, that the greatest of the pyramids which stand at Gizeh was erected, almost to a certainty, by one Cheops, a monarch of the fourth Egyptian dynasty, but is by no means, as regards the details of its construction, a typical specimen of the Egyptian pyramid. It appears to be rather the highest development of an original form, of which there are innumerable examples to be found for four hundred miles along the banks of the Nile; in fact, so far as the dates of construction can be determined, it would appear that there are still in existence many of an earlier period than this one of King Cheops. For instance, there is a famous example at Sakkarah, some fifteen miles from Cairo, known as the 'Stepped Pyramid,' which is considered by authorities the oldest building in the world. So we must leave this particular pyramid of Cheops out of the question for the time being, and understand the general method employed by the early Egyptians in constructing a pyramid.

When a monarch came to his throne, he immediately set about the making of a last resting-place for his royal bones; so his officers and head-masons having chosen a suitable base, they engaged, at merely nominal wages, vast *corvées* of workmen, and forced them to work unremittingly until their task was completed. The first step was to quarry out, at some considerable depth below the surface of the rock, a chamber, from which the architects ran a slanting passage at a certain determined angle with the plane of the surface of the plateau, until the mouth of it opened to the light. The builders then placed a square layer of masonry, some four or five feet in thickness, above the chamber and passage, in such a way as that the mouth of the passage aforesaid should appear exactly at the base of one of the sides. Thus much, and no more, was done the first year of the king's reign. The next year,

a similar but smaller layer of masonry was placed upon the first, so that it formed a high step all round with the lower one. The third year, a third but still smaller layer was placed atop the second; and so on year by year, until the pointed stone crowned the summit. Should the king meanwhile have died before the completion of the work, his body was placed in the chamber, and what his mighty tombstone wanted of being finished, was hurried up.

The building is now in the rough; there is much nice work about it; each side must present a smooth, polished surface, which must receive some beautifully cut hieroglyphics. How is this to be effected? It is a long and troublesome task; but time and labour were of small account in the eyes of the ancient Egyptian; he built for all time. So the first thing the masons of the old world do is to fill up with finely cemented masonry the angles of the steps, until, if we looked up from the base to the summit, we should find that the sides presented a tolerably even surface, but yet crossed at regular intervals by the sharp projecting corners of the steps. The master-builder is not satisfied with it yet, so he sends his workmen up to the summit, and they commence from there the laborious process of chiselling down the protruding corners, and of afterwards smoothing and polishing, until the sides catch the sun's rays upon a white limestone surface, the brilliancy of which is seen miles and miles away up and down the Nile Valley. When the body was placed in its sepulchre, the passage was sealed up, that none but those who knew the secret should ever find the entrance. This, then, was the method of constructing the ordinary Egyptian pyramid.

But we are paying a visit to a pyramid which is an extraordinary exception to the preceding general law. For some unaccountable reason, except it were from a haughty desire to eclipse all former monarchs in the magnificence of his tomb, the mighty builder of this pyramid extended his first layer of masonry far beyond the mouth of the passage which runs up from the chamber beneath, so that he is, under the necessity of continuing the passage at the same angle through the solid masonry, until it opens to the air some distance up the side of the pyramid; and not alone this, but he runs other passages, and constructs other chambers, high up in the depth of the masonry, with a strange and mysterious unity of design that completely baffles modern archaeologists. And most wonderful of all, when this stupendous work is finished, it is carefully sealed up; and so it has remained for thousands of years, until the rude hands of curious explorers forced a way into its inner sanctuary.

We are undecided as to which course to adopt, whether to visit the top or the interior of Cheops first. It is finally decided for the latter; so, accompanied by the whole rabble, with our picked men, and provided with candles, we mount the heap of rubbish that leads up to the little four-feet-square flue which is the sole entrance to the great mystery. Here let us offer a few words of advice, gathered from personal experience, as to exploring the interior. Go in very lightly clad, as the heat is oppressive, and the atmosphere rather stifling. It is not every one who can

perform the feat with impunity. We have met with some who have fainted outright upon coming to ground again; some who have turned back, fearing such an event. It is astonishing indeed how any pure air can possibly make its way into the passages and chambers, for the narrow ventilating shafts which run from the King's Chamber to the outer air have long since been choked by the accumulated dust of centuries. There is just sufficient air, but no more, to support life. The Arabs will carry anything the explorer needs to remove, so all superfluous clothing may be intrusted to the guide.

It is unwise to accept the services of more than one Arab for each visitor, as, if he finds himself in the majority, 'the son of the desert' is only too ready to assert himself by compelling his employer to pay more than is lawfully due to him. A friend of ours went in alone with two guides, and when they had led him far into the interior, they blew out the candles, and refused to relight them unless gold were given them. It was an awkward position. The darkness was indeed Egyptian for intensity; and the presence of two lithe, barefooted, unprepossessing Arabs, whose movements were excessively uncertain, was anything but pleasant. Fortunately, they are ardent cowards; and our friend getting a good hold of a swarthy neck in the dark, shook one of the rascals till he awakened the echoes of the King's Chamber with his cries for mercy; and the candles were at once relit. This is no uncommon trick. If the explorer exhibits any fear in entering the dark passages, through which at times he will have to pass on all-fours, the Arabs mark him soon enough as one from whom to extort money. The handle of a revolver protruding from a pocket is a most effective deterrent from annoyance; the traveller never needs to use it, but its presence is wholesome.

Our candles are lighted now, and we enter the flue, and have a weight of masonry above us which gives us oppressive nightmare sensations; and we are able to realise in part the awful situation of the man in Poe's tale upon whom the inexorable iron walls were slowly closing in. How puny one feels—how helpless! The floor is slippery as glass, the limestone casing having become like white polished marble, so we have to look to our footsteps. It is very dusty within too; a fine white powder soon covering our clothes. We are now at the bottom of the first passage, which stretches downwards to the level of the base of the pyramid; and here we come across signs of violent disruption, caused by the ignorant efforts of an early explorer to force his way into the building. From this point, a passage somewhat wider than the last rises dark before us; and we push on for one hundred and twenty-four feet, until we stand at the lower end of the Grand Gallery, which slopes upwards at the same incline. There is now plenty of space above our heads, for this so-called Gallery is twenty-eight feet in height. Its walls are formed of layers of masonry, each layer projecting beyond the one immediately below by three or four inches, so that towards the roof the walls close in considerably. Two banks of stonework run along the sides of this Gallery, pierced at intervals by curious square holes; for what purpose, it is difficult to conceive.

From the spot on which we now stand, here at the lower end of the Gallery, there runs a passage right into the centre of the building, parallel with its base, until it opens into what has been fancifully denominated the Queen's Chamber—a chamber twenty feet in height, with a pointed ceiling formed of immense slabs of stone, accurately fitted. Having seen this, we creep up the length of the Grand Gallery between the two banks of masonry, making use of the pigeon-holes to assist our slipping feet, until we at length stand within the furthest recess of the pyramid, the King's Chamber. Here, some say is the spot the mighty Cheops chose for his last resting-place, that he might differ in this respect from all preceding monarchs. Here lies the sarcophagus, now lidless and broken, which some say he hewed out of a block of Syene granite, for his own mummy. But the historians tell us how he never attained to the fulfilment of his wishes; for that his people, indignant at the enormous outlay in the building of this gigantic monument, remonstrated so effectually with his executors, that they were compelled to conceal his body, and afterwards bury it beneath the waters of the Nile.

This tomb-theory, as we may call it, has been rejected by some eminent Egyptologists, who see rather in these wonderful passages and chambers, a purpose and unity of design, which cannot be accounted for on the grounds of its being merely the efforts of a king to conceal perpetually the place of his sepulture. They assume to have discovered, after careful measurement conducted with patience and labour worthy of a better result, an extraordinary agreement of the proportions of the chambers, passages, and sarcophagus with the world-wide standards of lengths and capacities. They go very far, and say: 'Here we have the original revelation from heaven to man of our weights-and-measure system;' though why, if it be so, the being to whom it was revealed shut the knowledge up for ever, does not appear.

This theory is hardly satisfactory. No one can, however, for a moment question the unity of purpose exhibited throughout the building; but we should be content with a more reasonable deduction, somewhat like this: Cheops was a man far in advance of his age; he had sounded depths of mathematical and astronomical science far beyond the reach of his contemporaries; he stood alone in his own age, and feeling this superiority, with the haughtiness of a great intellect and despotic ruler, he said to himself: 'For what purpose is all my learning? These my people do not understand my researches. I will, therefore, in the building of my tomb erect a monument which will contain an everlasting record of my discoveries, and order my builders, when I am gone, to seal them up for ever. For I cannot think, in the slow progress of mankind, that any intellect comparable to mine will appear; so I will leave all my discoveries enshrouded in a mystery, and no key wherewith to solve it.' And indeed, if it was the intention of the monarch to mystify posterity, he has succeeded most thoroughly in his object.

We are back to the surface again, breathless, hot, and dusty; and now the ascent lies before us. Hauled up the whole four hundred and

fifty feet by two Arabs, and after many a rest by the way, we reach the summit, where, one would suppose some peace and silence were to be found. But no such good fortune awaits the traveller. The novelty of ascending that gigantic outside staircase, with steps from four to five feet high, never seems to wear off from the Arab mind, and so the tribe follow us up, still persistent in their efforts to impose Brummagem goods upon us.

The air that blows across the desert is bracing in the extreme, and at this height—higher than St Paul's dome—we are free from the disagreeable odours of Egyptian villages. The waste of sand around is sad and depressing. We have a good bird's-eye view of the immediate surroundings of the pyramid. Besides the three great pyramids, there are several smaller specimens scattered about, crumbling to ruin and half-buried in desert sand; and also innumerable tombs, most of which have been opened by Lepsius and other Egyptologists. Close at hand, too, is the temple of the Sphinx, built by King Chephren, brother to Cheops, to whom Herodotus ascribes the construction of the second pyramid; and last, but most imposing, is the weather-beaten Sphinx itself, on guard over this vast Valley of Dry Bones, watching for the first streak of the dawn of that resurrection in which the old Egyptian believed so firmly.

The last piastres have been distributed among the begging Arabs; and with a crack of our driver's whip we start, the evening shades closing in upon us, and soon shutting out from our view those high-piled, hoary monuments of the past.

EPHING FOREST.

WITHIN a few miles of the great throbbing heart of London, there still remains a portion of the royal Forest of Waltham, which in ancient times covered a great tract of country, and extended to the very walls of the city. Its vast area included the Forests of Hainault and Epping, of which some six thousand acres of picturesque woodland have, after much opposition and many difficulties, been secured for public health and recreation. By the new charter of Forest rights, not only wide stretches of land, after years of cultivation, have been redeemed from inclosure, and restored to the Forest limits, but nearly thirteen miles of almost unbroken woodland scenery, forming perhaps the most extensive pleasure-ground in Europe, have been formally dedicated by the Queen to the use and enjoyment of her people for all time.

So far back as the twelfth century, in the reign of King Stephen, and again by a charter of King John, much of the outlying land was disafforested. Edward I.'s 'Charta de Foresta' still further reduced its bounds, which were again determined by Charles I.; and since that time, they have been diminished year by year by illegal encroachments. Not only the residents of East London, but the nation at large must feel grateful to the Corporation of the City for preserving and restoring as far as possible to its ancient limits, a landmark, grand in itself, and interesting by right of its connection with splendid and historic memories.

Strange indeed was the aspect presented by the ancient Forest at the inaugural ceremony on that bright day in May, when the cheers and shouts and merriment of half a million of people broke the classic stillness of the woods; where gaudy uniforms of guards of honour, military bands, and civic dignitaries, made a charming contrast with the golden gorse and broom, and the green background of the wooded slopes. In contrast, too, with the overcrowded population which presses so closely on the borders of the Forest, we are reminded of those days in 'Green England' when, even in the last century, the red and fallow deer haunted her endless glades and vistas, and drank at the rush-grown pools; when the venerable oaks and beeches harboured birds, which the denudation of heathlands have made so rare—the kite, the great bustard, and the bittern; when picturesque gipsy encampments lent another charm to the silvan scene. The ambitious life of civilisation has banished also from this cool green Forest barrier the primitive hamlets and homesteads that nestled under the grand old trees; the rustic cottages, built of wood, or mud and clay, hardened by the smoke that escaped from an aperture in the roof, and which Hollinshed tells us was considered a 'medicine to keep the goodman and his family from the quack.' But in these 'so homely cottages,' which could not boast the luxury of a glazed window, the Spaniards in Queen Mary's reign saw with amazement 'what large diet was used,' and reported that 'the English have their houses of sticks and dirt, but they fare commonly so well as the king.'

For many centuries, Waltham was a hunting-ground for our kings. Its woods have echoed with the mellow horn and the baying of hounds, as over the soft thick turf many a gallant cavalcade has swept in the splendid pageantry of royal hunts. With the old hunting-tower still standing in the Forest, is associated the name of England's greatest queen, who, inheriting some part of her father's rough masculine spirit, displayed a passion for the chase. The legend runs that Elizabeth on one occasion rode her horse up the broad staircase into the dining-hall of the old lodge at Chingford, whose walls have listened to the romantic gallantry that distinguished the court of the Maiden Queen; they have witnessed, too, the lovesuit of the magnificent Leicester, whose noble form was seen to the greatest advantage in hunting-suit of gold-embroidered Lincoln green, crossed by the jewelled baldric, from which were suspended the bugle-horn and forest-knife; and who, in the reflected light of Elizabeth's favour, was a sovereign all but in name.

Indeed, every portion of the ancient Forest is suggestive of unexhausted interest to those who know something of its history. Around its annals group the figures of many royal personages, from Elizabeth in her stately ride to meet her troops at Tilbury Fort, at the period of the Spanish Armada; to Anne, who came to visit the famous oak; Edward III. and Johanna of Navarre, who alike retired amidst its solitudes; Richard II. starting from Havering-atte-Bower on his treacherous ride to Fleishy, the dower-house of many queens—away back to that name dear to the hearts of Englishmen, Harold, last of the Saxon kings.

We read how he loved Waltham—'the town in the weald or wood'—the estate given him by his brother-in-law the Confessor; how as a conqueror after Stamford Bridge, he came to pay his final vows prostrate before the 'miraculous crucifix'; how its name became his battle-cry of 'Holy Cross!' at Hastings; and how he was laid beneath its shadow in the Abbey Church—the simple inscription, 'Hic jacet HAROLDUS infelix', marking his resting-place.

This far-famed Abbey for Augustin canons was reared by Harold on the site of an old hunting-seat at Waltham, built by Toffig the Proud, a great Danish Theyn, in the time of Canute. It was endowed by Richard I. with the manor of Waltham and 'the Great Wood,' and its mitred abbot possessed unusual rights over the adjoining country and Forest; for in days of old, particularly under the Anglo-Saxon kings, the recesses of the Forest were kept as sacred as the groves of the Druids, by laws harsh and terrible. One of Edward's laws declares: 'I will that all men do abstain from hunting in my woods, and that my will shall be obeyed under penalty of life.' Tradition says that the Confessor's favourite residence was Havering, 'because solitary, shrouded in woods, and fitted for devotion;' also because here he could follow his only pastime of hunting the wild-deer in the forest, which at that time abounded with 'wild beasts, the bull and the boar.'

From a gentle eminence, half-veiled in trees, can be seen a vast expanse of virgin forest, and the borders of six counties. Here are Buckhurst Hill and Golding's Hill, where the adjacent keeper's lodge still looks over the resort of the deer; there Staples Hill, the scene of the mid-night assertion of the ancient claim of lopping and topping; farther still, beyond the intervening panorama of heaths and woodland, the valley of the Lea. What far-away forgotten memories are recalled by the placid windings of the river which Drayton says 'still brags of the Danish blood!' Over its peaceful waters has streamed the Raven banner of the Dane, when the dreaded war-ships of the Vikings came to ravage and destroy. Nine centuries have rolled away since Hæsten the Dane towed his vessels up the Lea, and 'wrought a work twenty miles above London.' Here he was attacked, and here he defeated the Saxon thanes.

In earlier times still, in these same flowery meadows of the Lea, lay Alfred, encamped by the sombre woods, waiting whilst the Sea-kings passed defiantly up the stream; but as they disappeared, the Saxons obstructed and divided the waters of the river, and the gilded 'sea-snakes' never returned. What a picture must the Lea have presented, alive with those gallant craft, which were models of ship-building, and filled with the fierce war-sons of the North—those supreme heroes of battle on the seas. And the Vikings, with their kindred tribes, remaining to settle peaceably in permanent homes in the land they had come to devastate, formed part of the Anglo-Saxon population, and as worshippers of Odin, had their incantations for the dead in the heart of Waltham Wood.

Still more remote associations linger around the Forest. Within the ancient boundaries are still to be seen vestiges which recall events that

changed the face of Britain. At Ambresbury Bank are the complete remains of a vast Roman camp made by Suetonius, which cover nearly twelve acres of ground; whilst two miles away in the district of Loughton, lies the recently discovered British camp. In a pitched battle on the classic ground between these two encampments, in 61 A.D., Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, after attacking the Roman settlements and burning London, was defeated by Suetonius. The British heroine, Tacitus informs us, destroyed herself by poison; and all this part of South Britain passed into the Roman division of Flavia Cesariensis.

In this restless nineteenth century, when the din of trade and shriek of railway-whistle echo on the outskirts of the woods, we may well be thankful for the preservation of this beautiful and extensive tract of forest scenery, lying so near the Great Metropolis, within the shadows and silence of which many a weary denizen of the East End of London may forget, perhaps but for a brief holiday, the mean and meagre surroundings of his daily life.

MY LOVE.

Six steps along the polished mead,
My true, my only love;
The white clouds fly in merry speed,
The great sun smiles above.

The yellow-cups of golden gleam,
The daisies silver white,
Uplift their dewy leaves and beam
A glittering delight.

The lark leaps up before her feet
With music on his wing;
The blackbird and the linnet sweet
Glad songs around her sing.

The crooked thorns in greeting shake
Their interwoven arms;
The tufted ash droops low to take
Full measure of her charms.

The grasshopper blows one keen note
From out his secret nest;
And butterflies, like snow-flakes, float
About her lily breast.

Tall meadow-sweet its perfume breathes
From every branching stem;
Bird's-eye with its long tendrils wreathes
A blue-starred diadem.

Well may ye lift your bold sweet song,
O birds that fill the air!
O flowers, well may ye shine and throng
To see a maid so fair!

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UP A DUTCH CANAL.

'HOLLAND is severely characteristic.' This is what I think, as our steamer gently glides into one of the longest of her numerous canals on our way to Rotterdam. In almost every continental town, you are occasionally reminded of something you have seen before. In St Petersburg you are met at every turn by old friends amid new surroundings; there is a bit of Paris, Germany, or Italy, in the build of that mansion, palace, or church; and in the lively gesticulations and affable bearing of the polished Russian, you recognise a not unfaithful representation of our neighbour on the other side of the Channel. In Copenhagen you can scarcely realise that you are in Denmark, and not in some quaint old German town; there are the narrow streets, the high red-tiled houses with pointed gables, and the solemn, undemonstrative men and women with German phlegm in face and gait. In Berlin, though you feel that this is indeed Germany, you are not struck with any pronounced feature which marks it a German town and none other; 'Unter den Linden' you meet many Jews, who gabble an execrable jargon as they pass you; and there is no national costume to strike the eye.

But in Holland, everything is essentially Dutch. The very air which plays upon my cheek this bright spring morning, blows nowhere but in Holland; it is laden with a strange, warm moisture, and the all-pervading perfume of grass. And what grass! It is of the deepest, softest emerald, a green which affords delightful rest to the eye. For some time there is little else to look upon save field upon field of billowy grass, in which graze numbers of sleek dappled cows, looking so unnaturally bright against the vivid green, that I am forcibly reminded of an ancient toy-box which used to exist in the nursery at home, in which the cows were all dappled and of startling hues. The fields are divided by high dikes, along which the dry level roads are made; and ever and anon, a high two-wheeled gig, drawn

by a lean long-legged horse, spins past against the bright blue background of the sky. The landscape is dotted with innumerable and ever-moving windmills—from one point of view I count twenty-three—by means of which the water is drained from the meadow-land, and transmitted into the deep ditches which flow continuously into the canal.

As we turn a bend in the canal, a little low-roofed Dutch farm comes into view, and I am again reminded of the contents of that miraculous toy-box. There is the little square white house with its brick-red roof; the stiff squat trees, cut into shapes, the very trunks modelled after the same pattern; the flock of dazzling white geese with the same blamelessly clean red legs; the horse, leaning its wooden neck over a lavishly painted gate; and the same squat little woman with short petticoats, and square-shouldered man with the supernaturally black high-crowned hat. 'So,' I think with a smile, 'this is where the benevolent artist borrowed that grand idea which has awakened rapture in the hearts of generations of children.' But I am so engrossed with my discovery, that I had almost let the tiny church slip past me on the other side, though a bell is tinkling in the belfry, it being Sunday. There is no nonsense about it; a plain, whitewashed edifice, with steeple and weather-cock, standing boldly on its reclaimed plateau. No useless ornamental buttress; no trees or flowers in the little graveyard which surrounds it. A church and nothing else; spotlessly clean, painfully plain, and eminently Dutch.

The Lutheran pastor who wends his way along the up-raised road, might be mistaken for an English High-church clergyman, in his long black coat, broad-brimmed felt hat, and plain white bands. The women look extremely neat; they wear pretty white caps, with long curtains flowing over their shoulders; the married women, with curiously twisted gold ornaments standing out from each side of their heads, and frequently a gold plate, which fits on to the head, and shines through the clear muslin. Occasionally they have the addition of a pair of massive earrings,

which glance gaily in the sunlight. But I look in vain amongst them for a pretty face or graceful form; extreme cleanliness and a certain stolid air of good-nature being their sole charms. Their figures are ungainly; their gait rolling and awkward—the result of wooden shoes. That worthy farmer with his imperturbable square face, with its high cheek-bones and large features, looks as if he would be more comfortable in his work-day clothes and wooden shoes, than in that shining black go-to-meeting suit, with boots to match. He leads a solemn little urchin by the hand, a small miniature of himself, who looks wistfully at a group of boys and girls who sit in happy freedom on the grassy embankment which slopes down to the side-walk at the edge of the canal. The moment they see our boat, they start to their feet, and follow us in their clattering wooden shoes, as they keep up a continuous droning song.

‘They are singing for biscuits,’ the captain informs me; and soon a lively scene commences. The sailors flock to the decks, where much laughing and merriment prevail. The little sturdy Dutch legs do wonders, for we are proceeding at a fair rate, and their vigorous efforts are rewarded by an occasional ship-bisenit, which causes a general scramble, until they begin to drop off one by one, to sink down into the long grass to wipe their hot faces and munch their biscuits.

Now we are passing the tiniest toy-house, one blaze of white and red, standing in the centre of a few yards of trim garden. A small laburnum tree, weighed down with golden blossom, overhangs the porch, and heightens the vividness of colouring. A few apple-trees in full bloom, pruned within an inch of their lives—their trunks actually whitewashed!—constitute the orchard, whilst every available inch of the tiny beds in front is filled with flowers. The daintily curtained windows, too, are gay with bright geraniums. The whole is raised, from the danger of often-recurring floods, on a high and solid foundation of bricks and mortar, scaled by a flight of steps. As we glide past, the door is suddenly burst open, and a remarkable female apparition rushes down the steps with a whoop like that of a red Indian, which declines into a nasal version of the ‘biscuit-song.’ I presume she is a specimen of Dutch womanliness; but as I have never seen her like either before or since, I beg my readers not to suppose that she is a type. She is as long and lank as a Maypole, though her age cannot be more than fifteen. She has shoulders which slope away to nothing; a deficiency which, however, is more than made up by a prodigious width of body. Her costume is a full-skirted black frock; a white cotton cap, devoid of frills, which fits as if grown to her head; a pair of long black stockings, and wooden shoes. Her unexpected appearance is greeted by a spontaneous roar of laughter from

the crew, and she is instantaneously hailed as ‘Sally.’

On we go, and ‘Sally’ follows; the shrill tones of the biscuit-song rise and fall in monotonous repetition, as if proceeding from some exhaustless wind instrument, and the wooden shoes keep time. Presently she is joined by a small boy, and a race begins. The short legs keep pace with the long ones in a way that is marvellous. A bisenit is thrown. They both fall upon it, and for some moments of suspense four wooden shoes wave wildly in the air. The small boy comes to light again looking flattened and tumbled; his countenance is immovable; but his rival is disclosing a large cotton pocket, which had hitherto been concealed beneath the ample folds of her skirt, and in it she deposits the biscuit. This tableau is repeated at intervals amidst the cheers of the sailors, for a period of time which does honour to Dutch perseverance, and the indefatigable ‘Sally’ is the last to give in.

As the sun begins to slope westward, I marvel at the manifold notes of the birds. I recognise the familiar tones of many an English field-songster. Larks fill the air with their rapturous melody; rows of swallows twit ceaselessly as they balanced themselves on the telegraph wires which run alongside the canal; and corn-crakes answer each other from neighbouring fields. Occasionally, a pair of red-legged storks strut solemnly about the low marsh-land, or stop to bolt a struggling frog.

The sunset this evening, if portrayed on canvas, would be pronounced exaggerated; nor can my pen succeed in describing the marvellous scene. Above the horizon hangs a filmy cloud of mist, which gradually assumes the most exquisite tints of purple, pink, and gold. There is a clear watery light resting on the peaceful landscape, which deepens as the sun drops silently behind the distant meadows, until every object seems to stand out as if illuminated by Bengal-fire. Gradually the light dies down into a lurid red, and the white mist curls up from the humid earth. In a short time my jacket is drenched, and I am glad to descend to the cabin. My berth, to which I shortly retire, proves a miserable deception as a place of repose; for though the feathered minnesingers have long since sunk to silence, another music has commenced, which renders night hideous. Millions of frogs keep up their incessant ‘Croak! Croak!’ The noise is deafening, and diminishes not until the dawn is trembling in the sky. I hurry on my clothes before sunrise, and go on deck; and here I learn to thank my enemies the frogs for having driven me from my uncomfortable couch to the enjoyment of a picture which will never fade from my memory. We are lying at the gates of a sluice, and in a perfect grove of fragrant fruit-trees, through the blossoming boughs of which peep the bright red roofs of a picturesque village. As the sun mounts higher on the horizon, the heavy

dewdrops which hang from every leaf and blade of grass flash back showers of glittering rays, which quiver and vary their glorious hues ere they fall like pattering raindrops on the ground. On the quay stands a meek-faced black goat with her family of three, all as dusky as herself.

But the dew which is turning all nature into a fairy scene, is wetting me to the skin, and I am obliged to go below, and take possession of a thick woollen rug in which to envelop myself. As the morning advances, signs of life begin to appear. The door of a cottage is opened, and a woman, in the usual short petticoats and wooden shoes, issues forth with a bucket, and a long pole furnished at the end with a hook. She hangs her bucket on the hook, and dips it into the canal. Then a splashing and mopping begins; bucket after bucket of water is lifted and dashed against the front of the house. Other doors are opened, and the same conduct—to me inexplicable—is pursued, until the whole place is in a swim. When at length the cleansing process has been accomplished to Dutch satisfaction, a plank having been placed from our boat to the quay, the women begin to flock on board with their baskets of eggs and butter, which the steward tells me are very dear. 'The Dutch,' he says, 'know how to drive a bargain.'

Many of them speak a few sentences of English; and I am impelled to buy some suspiciously green-looking oranges, at an exorbitant price, from an enterprising saleswoman because she accosts me with: 'Will you buy, my leddy? Scheep! seheap!'

It is nearly mid-day before we get through those sluice-gates and drop down towards Rotterdam. We pass other canals, which stretch away from us into the country. There are many of them so narrow that only small craft can ply upon them. The windmills multiply and then suddenly cease, for we are now in a region where they are unavailing; the land lies much below the level of the sea, and is irreclaimable. Most desolate, even in the bright mid-day sun, is the appearance of the shores. We are no longer in a canal, but in a wide sweep of dark turbid water, fringed by a wilderness of sedges and osiers. Flocks of teal and Brent rise with harsh discordant cry; whilst water-hens bob in and out amongst the twisted roots of the willows. In the background rises the bare straight high-road against the horizon. Here and there a tiny cottage stands on its platform of brick; at the foot of a flight of steps, a boat lies moored; the only means of exit and egress being by water. The occupation of these lonely dwellers of the marsh is osier-cutting. The osiers are split and made into hoops, an extensive traffic being carried on between Holland and other countries in this commodity.

Soon we begin to pass numerous vessels; the water widens, and a forest of masts rises in the distance, and there is Rotterdam. Very quaint and picturesque looks the ancient city with its curious gabled houses, over whose roofs the spires of more than one old church appear. The broad quay is planted with magnificent lime-trees, which also rear their leafy branches over the side-walks of the many canals which intersect the town like a network, where busy craft pass

up and down. But when the noise and bustle of the day are stilled, and I sit on deck and watch the great round moon lift her yellow face above the tall ships' masts, and softly throw her magic mantle over the scene, I think that Holland, with its ever-present waters, is a land of beauty and wonder.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXVII.—LIKE A GHOST REVISITING OLD HAUNTS.

WALKING slowly to his hotel through streets which had a half-awakened air about them, as if they, like himself, had been turning night into day, Mr Lumby was conscious of a singular sensation. It was as if an elastic cord alternately tightened and relaxed itself within his head. The tightening was terrible; the relaxation brought with it a very remarkable feeling of looseness in the brain, as though it had lost its boundaries. These curious symptoms recurred slowly at first; but after a little time the cord began to tighten and relax itself at an astonishing pace, and this, before he had gone far, resulted in a splitting headache and a general sense of stupefaction. 'I have been over-excited,' said the merchant to himself as he passed his hand across his forehead, and stood for a moment bareheaded in the chill morning air. 'Now I come to think of it, I have been terribly excited. Yes; it has been an exciting time, quite an exciting time. We have had a near shave, Gerard, a near shave.' Rousing himself to a knowledge of the fact that he was standing uncovered in the street, and seeing that a shop-boy had paused in the act of taking down shutters to stare at him, he resumed his hat and walked on. He seemed to take the matter very calmly now, he thought. A minute later last night, and Garling might have been triumphant after all. 'Yes,' he repeated vaguely, 'it was a near shave.' The tightening and relaxing cord in his head seemed in some inexplicable way to have got hold of that phrase—'a near shave'—with a tug of dreadful pain—'a near shave' with a sense of dreadful laxness and a loss of the brain's boundaries, as though it were altogether unfenced, and flowed out loose until the tug came and drew it together again with—'a near shave' for watchword. He was dimly conscious that this physical condition involved a mental condition which was as unusual as itself. The pain in his head was becoming unbearable by the time he reached the hotel. Boots, again amazed by his appearance at this abnormal hour, asked if he could do anything for him.

'A near shave,' said the merchant vaguely.

'Shave, sir?' said the Boots. 'Send for barber, sir, d'rec'ly, sir.'

'No; never mind that,' said Mr Lumby, awakening as if from a dream of fog with a horrible headache and one persistent phrase in it. 'Bring me a cup of tea—strong tea—unusually strong tea.'

'Yes, sir,' said the Boots; 'd'rec'ly, sir.' That was Boots's formula.—'Looks awful ill,' he thought, looking after the merchant. 'Odd thing for an elderly cove like him to be out all night two nights running. Ain't it now? And he

never was a frisky cove neither—not when he was young. Boots was getting elderly, and remembered Mr Lumby this many a year, and had an interest in him. He hurried off now for the tea, and was curious or interested enough—not having much upon his hands just then—to see it made and to volunteer to take it up himself. He was a sort of idealised Boots, and had two other actual Boots beneath him. His function at his present time of life consisted chiefly in telling the way to everywhere, the cab fare to everywhere, and the time of starting of all trains at all stations—an occupation purely intellectual, and making large demands on the mental resources. Mr Lumby in the eyes of Boots was as important a person as a prime-minister, if indeed a prime-minister could have come into measurable distance with him. The head of a great City house, member of parliament for his county, who might have been Lord Mayor as often as Dick Whittington if he had chosen, was necessarily a figure in that old-fashioned City hostel, where his father and grandfather were remembered as guests before him. Boots found the great man sitting on the bed, and noticed that he looked not only ill, but bewildered.

'Excuse me, sir,' said the Boots; 'you ain't like yourself at all, sir. Shall I pull your boots off, sir?' He was down upon his knees at this task at once.—'Can't ha' been a-drinking?' he thought, looking up at the venerable face above him. 'Been a-watching by a sick-bed,' he concluded charitably; 'that's more likely. That's where he's brought that troubled look from.'

'Give me the tea, if you please,' said the merchant, with a sudden awakening look. 'I have a very bad headache.—Boots!'

'Yes, sir.'

'I have business,' said the great man, rising teacup in hand, and speaking and looking a little vacantly, 'important business at—I have business'—he was bright and clear again—'at ten o'clock. I have time for an hour's sleep. Call me in an hour, and bring me another cup of strong tea. And I will take a hot bath.' He drank the tea, and passed his hand across his eyes; then knitting his fingers, pressed both palms heavily against his forehead, and in that attitude walked twice or thrice across the room and back again. 'In an hour's time, Boots,' he added, as that functionary was about to close the door—'not later.'

Being left alone, he partly undressed, and wrapping himself in a warm dressing-gown, stretched himself on the bed, and almost instantly fell asleep. So profound was his brief slumber, that when at the end of an hour Boots returned, and, beginning to make preparations for the bath, awoke him, Lumby found it difficult to believe that he had been left to himself more than a minute. It cost him a severe effort to rise; and no sooner was he erect again, than the cord within his head began once more to tighten and relax itself, and the aching sense of stupefaction returned. But a bath, a complete change of clothing, and a further cup of strong tea, made no bad substitutes for a night's sleep, and he went out refreshed to meet Garling. Looking back at the condition into which he had fallen on first entering the street, nearly two hours before, he felt some

alarm—of a retrospective sort—at the symptoms. 'It was no wonder,' he said as he walked briskly on, trying to forget his headache or to walk beyond it. 'The strain had been very terrible.' He was yet too near the edge of the precipice to dare to think much of the terrors he had escaped from. 'A little more of that,' he told himself, 'and I might have gone mad. I must be very cool and wary of excitement now.'

He reached the offices, and walked in square and upright. If he had been closely noticed, it would have been seen that his eyes were flinty, and that the flushed colour of his skin was of a different hue from that healthy redness of complexion which his face commonly wore, proof of a pure life and a good digestion. It wanted a few minutes of the hour, and there were but one or two of the clerks yet arrived. These, as the chief went squarely along, nodding here and there, noticed nothing unusual in him. Nor did any one observe any especial change in Garling when, two or three minutes later, and punctual to his hour as ever, he paced slowly in, with his hands behind him and his furtive eyes bent downwards.

Garling had not meant to be here again. He was not an imaginative man by conscious practice, but no man ever had great mental powers without the imaginative faculty being in strong force amongst them, and Garling felt like a ghost revisiting old haunts. He did not greatly care about being defeated, and he thought that curious. It was in remarkable contradiction to his sense of almost absolute indifference that when, in the course of dressing after his employer's departure, he had made preparations for shaving, he was compelled to huddle away his razors and lock them up, in a sudden terror-stricken distrust of his own will. It would be too powerful a temptation—not to him, for his indifference astonished him—to his land. That, he noticed as a phenomenon hitherto unobserved, or, until now, outside his experience, and thought it would be psychologically interesting to know if suicides were ever committed in that mood and manner. Once or twice, as a matter of mere theory, and not as having much relation to himself, he wondered whether Lumby had left him any loophole of escape. He had left him two hours alone. What might have been done in two hours? To re-secure his fraudulent gains, nothing. To escape?—he had nothing to escape from. His personal liberty was guaranteed already, under certain conditions. One of them was that he should present himself at the offices at ten o'clock. He went thither automatically, with the sense of a ghostly revisiting of old scenes and resumption of old habits accompanying him and growing upon him all the way. He had been sleepless for two nights, and had a feeling of dreaming awake, and of walking in an atmosphere of nightmare, which might take shape at any moment in such forms as only the dreadful hollows of dark night can hold.

And so, almost exhausted on either side, the two combatants met again. On Garling's entrance, Mr Lumby arose and locked the door. He had waited in the room which the cashier had always used; and now resuming the seat from which Garling's coming had disturbed him, he waved

him to another on the opposite side of the table. It was the seat the regular occupant had been in the habit of offering to visitors. The cashier had an oddly-vivid feeling as he took it, of being now a stranger in the place. There was no bitterness or defeat in this: it tickled him a little, and he suppressed a smile. He was puzzled to define the humour of the situation, but it was there, none the less. Lumby, for his part, between the racking headache which had again attacked him, and the sleepy stupor which dwelt on all his faculties, had to make an effort to decide within himself for what purpose he had called Garling there. There was silence for a space of perhaps half a minute.

'One thing was omitted when we parted this morning,' said the merchant coldly, having regained the lost thread of his thoughts. 'I have your written confession here, and your statement of the funds which lie in your name at the Bank at Madrid. I want now your order for the transference of those funds to the Bank of England, to be placed there to the credit of the House.'

'The sum is a large one,' said Garling, 'and they will more easily meet the demand if it be made by instalments. Say fifty thousand now, and fifty thousand fortnightly afterwards, until the whole is withdrawn.'

'Say weekly,' said the merchant.

'Very well,' returned Garling.

'I shall require you to accompany me to the Bank, and to have inquiries wired to their agents in Madrid.'

'Very well,' said Garling again.

'Your being here this morning is a proof that you recognise the futility of any attempt to escape until your restoration is completed. Your only safety lies in obedience. My pledge will not operate a moment beyond your failure or rebellion.'

'I understand,' responded Garling.

'Prepare the necessary drafts,' said the merchant rising, 'and bring them to me. Before I leave you, surrender your keys. Be ready to accompany me to the Bank by mid-day.' Garling produced his keys, and suppressing an inclination to fling them on the table, laid them gravely down. Where was the use of a demonstration of rebellion when he was bound body and soul? Mr Lumby took them up, unlocked the drawer in which he had placed Garling's confession, withdrew that document, and placed it in the safe, the cashier watching him all the while with wicked furtiveness. Next the merchant laid a heavy hand upon the bell. 'Ask Mr Barnes to come to me,' he said to the messenger who answered to the summons. After a short pause, enter Mr Barnes, a placid but keen-looking man, with a frame of wiry white hair about a healthy-hued face, and calm gray eyes which looked through gold-rimmed spectacles. 'Mr Barnes,' said the merchant.—Mr Barnes bowed ever so slightly.—'You will take your place in this room, if you please, until you receive further instructions. Attend to these matters in the first instance'—waving a hand towards the heaped documents and letters on the table—'and take to-day the general direction of affairs. The matter need not at present be mentioned, but Mr Garling has ceased to hold any connection with the firm.'

Mr Barnes was like one thunderstruck by this

intelligence. If he had been told that Jupiter had ceased to have any connection with the planetary system, it could not have hit him harder. And in that supposititious case there would have been the refuge of unbelief to fall back upon, whilst here he was bound not to question for a moment. It was not a specified part of the merchant's undertaking with the cashier that his crime should be kept a secret, but there were many reasons which made that seem advisable. Lumby's own self-esteem went strongly in that direction, and the firm had not been accustomed to the employment of fraudulent servants. His pride in the probity of the House seemed smirched by this associate villainy, and he was not wishful to spread such a sentiment in other minds. The temporarily appointed cashier being left to his own amazement, came out of it gradually, with a general verdict of—something wrong somewhere.

'Is it your desire that I should send for the necessary forms, or myself apply for them?' asked Garling, addressing Mr Lumby, in his ordinary business tone.

'As you please,' he answered. 'But be ready to accompany me at noon.—You will open the letters and attend to general business matters, Mr Barnes.' The merchant withdrew into his own room and closed the sliding panel. 'Safe,' he thought, 'quite safe now;' and reaching with something of a blinded groping motion for a chair, he sat down and turned himself to the table. How horribly his head ached. It was well he had been able to keep a clear mind so far, and carry the situation through to this point. Thinking of what the consequences might have been, but for his seemingly accidental resolve to impeach Garling without waiting for further discoveries, he half started from his chair twice or thrice. That awful cord was tightening and loosening in his head again, and he could scarcely see for pain. An hour or two more and he would be free to rest. The excitement had been too much for him, and he would go back to the hotel and sleep it off. Sleep was all he wanted. The strain had been more than he knew of at the time, and he was not so young as he had been. Thinking thus, he sat with his arms lying heavily on the table, and with his head depending downwards heavily. More and more leaden grew the weight of pain, and at length his head drooped on his arms, and he fell asleep once more.

AN OLD ENGLISH BATTLEFIELD.

THE stupendous character of modern military conflicts, and the altogether different conditions under which the campaigns of these later times have been conducted, are apt to obscure the struggles which a few centuries ago helped to shape the history and destiny of our native land.

Among the classic grounds of English history, Bosworth Field claims a foremost place. There the curtain fell on a long and tragic drama, one that for some thirty years had occupied, with bitter results, the whole stage of English history. The last conflict between the rival 'Roses,' it was also the most romantic, and therefore, perhaps, the most interesting; yet, from the circumstance that

it had no contemporary historian, and that, therefore, but few authentic details are preserved of the fight, its importance is apt to be overlooked. Shakspeare's dramatic version is of course somewhat fanciful and unreliable, though it has notwithstanding an immortal place in his writings. A brief and quaint account appears in Burton's History of Leicestershire, published in 1622; and at a later period, William Hutton, the indefatigable Birmingham antiquary, spent a long time in the neighbourhood of the battlefield, and from his researches among the records and traditions of the district, compiled an elaborate account of the conflict. His history is, however, more or less inaccessible and unknown to the general public; hence it seems desirable that the most reliable descriptions of the conflict should be reproduced for the general advantage of modern readers.

Shenton Station, on the Ashby and Nuneaton line, is the most convenient halting-place for Bosworth. Crossing the railway by the foot-bridge south of the station, the elevated ground is reached, known as Ambian Hill, which not only commands an excellent view of the whole area of the battlefield, but was, in fact, the centre of its fiercest struggle. About a mile to the south-west can be seen some meadows, called the White Moors; and here the Earl of Richmond was encamped on the eve of the battle. Landing at Milford Haven on Saturday, August 6, 1485, with about two thousand followers, he had advanced through Cardigan and Welshpool to Shrewsbury, his army increasing considerably *en route*. He encamped outside Lichfield on Tuesday, August 16; and next day advanced through Tamworth to Atherstone. Two days earlier, Lord Stanley and Sir William Stanley had preceded him with their Cheshire troops, ostensibly to aid the king's cause, yet secretly sympathising with Richmond. It is said they held a private interview with the latter at Atherstone; and on the eve of the great conflict, managed to dispose of their forces so as to be able to declare for Richmond when the crisis came. The latter led his troops from Atherstone over the bridge at Wetherley, encamped on the White Moors, and constructed intrenchments, traces of which remained up to very recent years.

The king, hearing of Richmond's landing at Milford, made due preparations to meet him, and advanced to Leicester with about twelve thousand men. Leaving that town on the morning of August 17, and expecting to meet Richmond at Hinckley, he made for Elmsthorpe, reaching that place in the evening, and, with his officers, spending the night in the village church. Finding he was too early for his rival, he moved a little to the north-west, and encamped on some high ground called the Bradshaws, close to Sutton, and about a mile due west from our stand-point. About two miles to the south, the tall spire of Stoke-Golding Church is seen; and on the left, a little nearer, the quaint church and village of Dadlington. Half a mile beyond the latter, and about a mile east of Stoke, was Lord Stanley's camp, bounded by a small stream called the Tweed. His lordship had posted his men ostensibly to protect the king's left flank, but in reality to attack it if circumstances should

be favourable. The Duke of Norfolk with four thousand troops encamped on the slopes of the hill north of Sutton; and Sir W. Stanley supported his right with about three thousand more. Such were the positions of the contending forces on the eve of the fight.

Hearing of Richmond's movements, the king had moved his forces on the 21st to some ground called Dicken's Nook, behind Sutton Hall to the west, addressed his troops as to the expected conflict on the morrow, and there pitched his tents. At four o'clock on the morning of the 22d, Richard was astir, and advanced his men in the direction of his antagonist. The archers formed the front line, commanded by the Duke of Norfolk; and following these, came the king with a compact body of men, flanked on each side by cavalry under the Earl of Northumberland and Sir Robert Brakenbury. These troops covered the northern and eastern sides of Ambian Hill, and there awaited the expected attack.

At ten o'clock, Richmond with his seven thousand men crossed the Tweed and the meadows that bordered it, and advanced towards the southern side of the hill. A body of Norman archers led the way, commanded by the Earl of Oxford. Sir Gilbert Talbot held the right wing, and Sir John Savage the left; while Richmond, clad in armour, commanded the centre. And then the fight commenced. 'Lord!' says Graftbury, 'how hastily the soldiers buckled their helms! how quickly the archers bent their bows and flushed their feathers! how readily the billmen shook their bills, and proved their staves, ready to approach and join when the terrible trumpet should sound the bloody blast to victory or death!' Then we are told; 'The trumpet blew, and the soldiers shouted, and the king's archers courageously let fly their arrows. The Earl's bowmen stood not still, but paid them home again, and the terrible shot once passed, the armies joined and came to hand-strokes.'

For an hour the battle raged furiously round this hill, between the men under the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Oxford, the two leaders even engaging in hand-to-hand combat. But a stray arrow killed the Duke, whose son, the Earl of Surrey, with others, made a desperate effort to avenge his death, but in vain. Then Richard ordered Northumberland to advance; but his troops wavered; and at that moment, Lord Stanley came up with his men, and joined Richmond—an ominous movement, the gravity of which Richard was not slow to understand. The crisis was becoming desperate, and needed desperate measures; hence, hearing that Richmond with his body-guard was posted on the other side of the hill, the king determined on a supreme effort—nothing short of an encounter with his rival in person, shouting in a tone of despair: 'If no one will go with me, I will go alone.' Some had urged safety in flight; and according to one account, a fleet horse was brought, with which the king, then in great peril, might have secured his life; but instead of desiring to escape, as Shakspeare represents, he indignantly rejected the proposal. Putting spurs to his own charger, he made a rush at Richmond, followed by his body-guard, including Lord Ferrers, Lord Lovell, Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir Richard Ratcliffe. The

fight was short and desperate. With one exception, the king's companions were all cut down; several of Richmond's sharing the same fate; and then the two rivals were about to fight single-handed, when Stanley's men coming up at that critical moment, created a diversion, and the king was immediately surrounded, his horse was entangled in a bog, and as his enemies closed in, he was speedily slain.

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The site of the battle has of course undergone considerable transformation in later times. A canal and railway now intersect its area; the swampy ground has been drained, and a wood occupies what was once a morass, the nature of which had something to do with the dispositions, and perhaps also the result of the conflict. Within living memory, many relics of the fight have been discovered during draining operations. In the churchyard at Daddington, large numbers of the slain were interred; and a few years since, in digging new graves, piles of skeletons were unearthed, lying five or six deep. The ill-fated king's remains were disturbed much earlier; for when the monasteries were secularised, his tomb was destroyed; and it is said that his body was thrown into the river Soar, and his stone coffin afterwards used as a horse-trough. In 1612, however, Wren states in his *Parentalia*, that he saw, in Alderman Robert Heyrick's garden at Leicester, a handsome stone pillar, three feet high, inscribed: 'Here lies the body of RICHARD III., sometime King of England;' and at the present day there is a tablet in King Richard's Road, Leicester, stating that 'Near this spot lie the remains of Richard III., the last of the Plantagenets.' But no grave or mausoleum now exists by which his last resting-place can be verified, and hence those royal remains, unhonoured in death, have long since been scattered—how and where, none now can tell.

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THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. III.

ON quitting the *bureau* of the *avocat*, the young fisherman inadvertently wandered into the twentieth arrondissement, formerly a detached village, called Belleville, but now one of the most turbulent districts of Paris, and at that period the headquarters of Communism. He soon discovered that he had strolled away from those parts of the city he wished to see; but as he wandered along, seeking to get clear of the dirty, narrow streets which opened in every direction, whichever way he turned he found himself becoming more and more involved amidst the intricacies of the poverty-stricken quarters; and still, unknown to himself, he was followed by Lucien Pierret. It would have been difficult, probably, for Lucien to say with what special object he thus followed the young fisherman in his rambles through the city. It was perhaps chiefly that he sought to discover Antoine's motive for coming to Paris so soon after his return from sea; while at the same time he may

it had no contemporary historian, and that, therefore, but few authentic details are preserved of the fight, its importance is apt to be overlooked. Shakspeare's dramatic version is of course somewhat fanciful and unreliable, though it has notwithstanding an immortal place in his writings. A brief and quaint account appears in Burton's History of Leicestershire, published in 1622; and at a later period, William Hutton, the indefatigable Birmingham antiquary, spent a long time in the neighbourhood of the battlefield, and from his researches among the records and traditions of the district, compiled an elaborate account of the conflict. His history is, however, more or less inaccessible and unknown to the general public; hence it seems desirable that the most reliable descriptions of the conflict should be reproduced for the general advantage of modern readers.

Shenton Station, on the Ashby and Nuneaton line, is the most convenient halting-place for Bosworth. Crossing the railway by the foot-bridge south of the station, the elevated ground is reached, known as Ambian Hill, which not only commands an excellent view of the whole area of the battlefield, but was, in fact, the centre of its fiercest struggle. About a mile to the south-west can be seen some meadows, called the White Moors; and here the Earl of Richmond was encamped on the eve of the battle. Landing at Milford Haven on Saturday, August 6, 1485, with about two thousand followers, he had advanced through Cardigan and Welshpool to Shrewsbury, his army increasing considerably *en route*. He encamped outside Lichfield on Tuesday, August 16; and next day advanced through Tamworth to Atherstone. Two days earlier, Lord Stanley and Sir William Stanley had preceded him with their Cheshire troops, ostensibly to aid the king's cause, yet secretly sympathising with Richmond. It is said they held a private interview with the latter at Atherstone; and on the eve of the great conflict, managed to dispose of their forces so as to be able to declare for Richmond when the crisis came. The latter led his troops from Atherstone over the bridge at Wetherley, encamped on the White Moors, and constructed intrenchments, traces of which remained up to very recent years.

The king, hearing of Richmond's landing at Milford, made due preparations to meet him, and advanced to Leicester with about twelve thousand men. Leaving that town on the morning of August 17, and expecting to meet Richmond at Hinckley, he made for Elmsthorp, reaching that place in the evening, and, with his officers, spending the night in the village church. Finding he was too early for his rival, he moved a little to the north-west, and encamped on some high ground called the Bradshaws, close to Sutton, and about a mile due west from our stand-point. About two miles to the south, the tall spire of Stoke-Golding Church is seen; and on the left, a little nearer, the quaint church and village of Dadlington. Half a mile beyond the latter, and about a mile east of Stoke, was Lord Stanley's camp, bounded by a small stream called the Tweed. His lordship had posted his men ostensibly to protect the king's left flank, but in reality to attack it if circumstances should

be favourable. The Duke of Norfolk with four thousand troops encamped on the slopes of the hill north of Sutton; and Sir W. Stanley supported his right with about three thousand more. Such were the positions of the contending forces on the eve of the fight.

Hearing of Richmond's movements, the king had moved his forces on the 21st to some ground called Dicken's Nook, behind Sutton Hall to the west, addressed his troops as to the expected conflict on the morrow, and there pitched his tents. At four o'clock on the morning of the 22d, Richard was astir, and advanced his men in the direction of his antagonist. The archers formed the front line, commanded by the Duke of Norfolk; and following these, came the king with a compact body of men, flanked on each side by cavalry under the Earl of Northumberland and Sir Robert Brakenbury. These troops covered the northern and eastern sides of Ambian Hill, and there awaited the expected attack.

At ten o'clock, Richmond with his seven thousand men crossed the Tweed and the morasses that bordered it, and advanced towards the southern side of the hill. A body of Norman archers led the way, commanded by the Earl of Oxford. Sir Gilbert Talbot held the right wing, and Sir John Savage the left; while Richmond, clad in armour, commanded the centre. And then the fight commenced. 'Lord!' says Graftbury, 'how hastily the soldiers buckled their helms! how quickly the archers bent their bows and flushed their feathers! how readily the billmen shook their bills, and proved their staves, ready to approach and join when the terrible trumpet should sound the bloody blast to victory or death!' Then we are told: 'The trumpet blew, and the soldiers shouted, and the king's archers courageously let fly their arrows. The Earl's bowmen stood not still, but paid them home again, and the terrible shot once passed, the armies joined and came to hand-strokes.'

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ON quitting the *bureau* of the *avocat*, the young fisherman inadvertently wandered into the twentieth *arrondissement*, formerly a detached village, called Belloville, but now one of the most turbulent districts of Paris, and at that period the headquarters of Communism. He soon discovered that he had strolled away from those parts of the city he wished to see, but as he wandered along, seeking to get clear of the dirty, narrow streets which opened in every direction, whichever way he turned he found himself becoming more and more involved amidst the intricacies of the poverty-stricken quarters; and still, unknown to himself, he was followed by Lucien Pierrot. It would have been difficult, probably, for Lucien to say with what special object he thus followed the young fisherman in his rambles through the city. It was perhaps chiefly that he sought to discover Antoine's motive for coming to Paris so soon after his return from sea; while at the same time he may

have thought that something might occur that would enable him to gratify his long-cherished craving for vengeance. If the latter notion occupied his thoughts, the opportunity occurred sooner than he could have anticipated.

Antoine was passing through one of the longest, crookedest, and narrowest streets of this disreputable district, when he saw, a few paces in advance of him, a young lad of eighteen, who was apparently a stranger in Paris, and who seemed to be wandering about without having any particular object in view. That the young fellow was a peasant, was manifest, not only in his garb, but likewise in his gait, manner, and whole appearance. He wore a blue linen blouse, belted round the waist, and a pair of clumsy sabots, which, together with his leathern gaiters, were incrustated with the dried yellow mud of the country lanes; and as he slouched along, as if he were traversing a newly ploughed field, he stared about him with a look of stupid wonder and curiosity. Suddenly, three of the small, boyish-looking soldiers of which the infantry of France seems to be mainly composed, bearing muskets and fixed bayonets that to a casual observer would appear too heavy for them to carry, pounced upon him from beneath a covered gateway, one of the party seizing him by the collar of his blouse and declaring him to be under arrest.

For a few moments the youth appeared to be stupefied; then he struggled to release himself, but was instantly seized by another of the soldiers, while the third, whose arm bore a corporal's stripe, told him that he had better come quietly to jail.

'Why do you arrest me? What crime have I committed?' whined the young man, as he trembled in every limb. 'I have but this day arrived in Paris. I am a stranger in the city, and am innocent of wrong-doing.'

'Innocent! Of course thou art innocent, *mon brave*,' sneered the corporal. 'Harmless as a lamb. Nobody is ever guilty, according to his own account.—Take the fellow along, comrades!'—addressing the soldiers—'the mob is already closing up behind us.'

This was true. Whence they came, it would have been hard to say; but in less than half a minute, the hitherto almost deserted street was thronging with truculent, ill-looking men, and dirty, frowsy, hard-featured females, clad in every variety of ragged costume, who appeared like so many hideous scarecrows; while still others came forth from every doorway in the narrow street. All took common cause against the soldiers, two of whom levelled their muskets, and prepared to defend themselves from the threatened attack, while the third took charge of the prisoner. Many of the men were armed with short, stout cudgels, and some of the women grasped broom-handles in their sinewy hands. The women were loud in their clamour.

'*Fi donc, fi!*' they cried. 'Let the lad go free, *mouchards, tyrans*—spies that ye are!'

Perceiving that the crowd took his part, the young fellow said: 'Believe me, *citoyens* and *citoyennes*, I am innocent. I have but this day

arrived in Paris. My father is an honest farmer of Clermont. 'Tis the first time I have been in the city. I have come to see my brother, who is an honest artisan, and works somewhere in this quarter of Paris.' There was apparent truth in the young man's looks and voice as he pleaded with the crowd.

'That is doubtless true,' cried a stout, burly virago, whirling a broomstick over her head, to the imminent peril of her companions. 'Poltroons'—addressing the male portion of the crowd—'cowards that ye are! Have ye no spirit, that ye would let a poor lad be dragged to prison, to be shot on the ramparts to-morrow, when half-a-dozen women might set him free?'

Hearing his prophetic doom thus pronounced, the poor lad wept aloud, as he entreated the crowd to release him.

Irritated by the woman's taunts, the men caught up the cry, 'To the rescue! To the rescue!' and bore down savagely upon the soldiers, two of whom bravely kept the leaders of the mob at bay for a few moments by charging with their bayonets. But muskets and bayonets were soon wrested from them; they were struck down and brutally kicked and trampled upon, and their uniforms torn into shreds. The third soldier, however, disregarding the perilous position of his comrades, had retained his grasp of the prisoner, and, unnoticed by the mob, who were fully occupied in wreaking vengeance upon their natural foes, the military, had dragged the unfortunate youth into a by-street, and would speedily have disappeared with him, had not Antoine, who had hitherto looked on as if bewildered, but whose sympathies were with the peasant, hastened to the rescue of the young lad. Wrenching the musket and bayonet from the grasp of the soldier, he struck him senseless to the ground with one blow of his fist. 'Run, lad, run!' he cried. 'Dost not see that thou art free? Away, away!'

The peasant, who for a few moments seemed to have become paralysed with terror, made off as fast as his legs could carry him.

The beat of a drum and the steady tramp of feet were heard near by.

'Scatter! Scatter and fly!' shouted a hoarse voice in the rear of the crowd. 'Do ye not hear? The soldiers are approaching!'

The mob disappeared as rapidly as they had gathered, leaving the unfortunate soldiers stretched on the ground bleeding, bruised, and senseless. In half a minute the front rank of a troop of soldiers appeared at the entrance of the street. Antoine was stooping over the soldier whom he had struck down, striving to restore him to consciousness. He knew not of the approach of the troop until the men were close upon him, when, suddenly becoming aware of his own danger, he took to flight. Some of the soldiers started in pursuit of the fugitive, while the main body hastened to the succour of their hapless comrades. Antoine, however, gained upon his pursuers, and would have escaped, but that on turning the corner of a street, he found himself confronted by another party of soldiers who were hastening to the scene of the disturbance. He stopped short, and was about to take refuge in a narrow court, where he might have concealed himself till the soldiers had passed by, when Lucien Pierrot, who had

never lost sight of the young fisherman, and had witnessed all that had occurred, shouted: 'Seize that man! He is a Communist, and was the leader of the mob.'

In an instant, Antoine was surrounded, seized, and pitilessly dragged off to prison. There was a brief examination before a sergeant of police, in which Lucien Pierrot, who appeared as prosecutor, denounced the prisoner, Antoine Duroc, as a Communist leader of the lowest and vilest class, and swore that he had seen the prisoner strike a soldier down with his own hand and brutally maltreat him, thus effecting the release of a man under arrest.

Antoine, who declared that he was not a Communist, and that he knew not the meaning of the word, did not attempt to deny that he had struck down a soldier, and released a poor young peasant whom he believed to be innocent. This was enough; he was ordered to be confined and closely guarded until he could be brought before the military authorities the next day. The jailer, however, who was a native of Brittany, and had heard the young fisherman's simple story, believed in his innocence. He knew Lucien Pierrot as a paid government spy, and believed him capable of any falsehood or iniquity whereby he might gratify his malice against any individual who had offended him, or might pocket a reward for his vigilance in behalf of the government. He pitied the unfortunate prisoner; and Antoine, who felt the need of sympathy, spoke of his young wife, who would now be impatiently awaiting his return from Paris.

'It grieves me sorely, Monsieur,' he added, 'that I have no means of acquainting my poor Madeleine with the misfortune that has befallen me. She will not know what to think, and will fear that some serious accident has happened to me.'

'Thou canst write to thy wife, *mon ami*,' said the jailer. 'I will post the letter.'

'Monsieur, I cannot write,' replied Antoine.

'Then tell me what thou would'st say, and I will write for thee.'

Antoine dictated a few lines, informing Madeleine that he was in prison in Paris, having been denounced as a Communist by a government spy named Lucien Pierrot; but, anxious not to alarm his wife, he expressed the hope that he would speedily be released, and that he would be able, when taken before the court, to prove his innocence.

The jailer shook his head gravely, but made no remark; and probably Antoine himself did not feel the confidence in his speedy release that he sought to impart to his wife; though, being ignorant of the dreadful severity with which those who were suspected of Communism were punished, he doubted not that he would be set at liberty in the course of a few days at the furthest.

The letter was despatched; and was received by Madeleine at the moment when she was setting forth to meet her husband at the Honfleur railroad *dépot*, fully expecting him to return that day.

The young wife was dreadfully alarmed on reading the letter. 'It is my fault,' she thought. 'I am to blame. I ought not to have concealed from my husband the base conduct of the villain

Lucien Pierrot. He threatened me with vengeance, and now he has accomplished his purpose. If I had told Antoine, he would have been on his guard against the wretch, and this trouble would not have occurred. But I acted, as I thought, for the best.' She sunk into a chair, and for a few minutes felt perfectly helpless; but recollecting that it was necessary to exert herself immediately in her husband's behalf, she determined to proceed instantly to the mayor of Honfleur and seek his advice and assistance.

Monsieur le Maire was himself the owner of numerous fishing-luggers. Antoine was known to him, and was a favourite with him; and Madeleine knew that he would do all in his power to help her in her sore trouble. He read the letter, and heard from Madeleine the story of Lucien Pierrot's base conduct towards her. That Antoine had no connection with Communism, he was well aware; but he read the journals constantly, and he knew that the government, having been terribly frightened, were now proceeding with ruthless severity against all persons even suspected of complicity with Communism. That the young fisherman was guiltless of any such complicity, he could prove, if it were not already too late; but then he knew nothing of Antoine's having assaulted a soldier and released a man under arrest. Nothing of this was mentioned in the letter.

'You must hasten immediately to Paris,' he said. 'I know not what else to advise. I am acquainted with the *sous-préfet* of police—a worthy man, who will do all in his power to help you, if satisfied that your husband is innocent. But you must lose no time. I will give you a letter to Monsieur le Sous-préfet.—Shall you need money?' Not wishing to alarm Madeleine, the mayor said nothing to her of his own fear that it might be already too late to save her husband. He wrote the letter, and handed it to her, and having been assured that she needed no help in money, advised her to set forth immediately.

The young wife needed no urging. Anticipating the result of her interview with the mayor, she had left her babe in charge of a kind neighbour; and proceeding instantly to the railway station, she, after five tedious hours, reached Paris. A stranger, unaccustomed to the noise, bustle, and confusion of a great city, she felt for the moment bewildered and lost. But the errand she had come upon quickened her faculties and inspired her with a desperate courage. Her first idea was to visit her husband and gladden him with her presence; and inquiring her way of different persons whom she met, she soon found the prison in which Antoine was confined. But, on requesting admission, she was informed that, without a special order from a magistrate, no person was permitted, under any circumstances, to visit or to have any communication whatever with a prisoner. It was terrible for her to gaze upon the stone walls of the prison, and knowing that her husband was confined within those walls, to be refused permission to see him. But wasting no time in useless lamentation, she hired a conveyance, and was driven to the abode of the *sous-préfet*, some little distance beyond the city. It was already late when she reached the house; but she rang the bell, and gained admittance.

Monsieur le Préfet had just dined, she was informed by a servant, and would see no person on business that evening; she must attend at the police court the next morning. But on her producing the letter from the mayor of Honfleur, the servant said that he would acquaint Monsieur with her presence.

The sous-préfet was seated at a table reading an evening journal, when the servant entered and informed his master that a young woman wished to see him on business of importance.

'At this hour!' exclaimed the préfet angrily. 'I cannot be disturbed. You should have told her so. Tell her to call at my bureau to-morrow.'

The servant withdrew, but presently reappeared.

'What now, sirrah?' demanded the préfet.

'Monsieur,' replied the servant, 'the young woman will not go away. She says she must see you on a matter of life and death, and she bade me hand you this letter.'

With an exclamation of angry annoyance, the préfet glanced over the contents of the letter. 'Who is this woman? What does she look like?' he asked.

'She is very young, Monsieur, and seems to be in sore trouble. She told me she had travelled a long distance.'

'Well, well; show her up-stairs.'

The servant again withdrew; and in a few moments returned, accompanied by Madeleine, frightened, even amidst her sorrow, at the grandeur—to her eyes—by which she was surrounded.

'Enter, Madame,' said the préfet, who appeared to be surprised at the extreme youth and remarkable appearance of the young woman in her fisherwoman's garb. 'Pray, be seated, Madame,' he continued in a gentler tone of voice; 'and please to tell me briefly and clearly the object of your visit to Paris. I learn from my friend the mayor's letter that your husband is in prison, charged with complicity with Communism. My friend writes to assure me that he can certify that your husband cannot possibly be connected with the infamous Communists.'

'No; my husband knows nothing of the matter, Monsieur,' said Madeleine; and then she briefly told how it happened that he had visited Paris at this time.

'Then he arrived but three days ago, young woman?' said the préfet. 'His name? Ah!—again glancing over the mayor's letter—I see; Antoine Duroc. It strikes me,' he went on, 'that I have some recollection of that name.' He rose, went to a writing-table, and returned and re-seated himself, glancing over the pages of a rough ledger or memorandum-book. As he did so, he read, as if to himself, yet loud enough for Madeleine to hear: 'Antoine Duroc, fisherman, aged twenty-three years, charged with inciting a mob to attack the military, and with having himself violently assaulted a soldier and released a prisoner who was under arrest. Denounced as a dangerous Communist by Lucien Pierrot.'

'This is a serious matter, young woman,' said the préfet to Madeleine; 'much more serious than my friend's letter led me to anticipate. It is out of my power to interfere in the matter, even if I had the wish to do so; and I have no

sympathy with the Communists, nor with individuals who incite others to offend against the laws.'

'Oh, believe me, Monsieur!' interrupted Madeleine, wringing her hands in an agony of distress; 'it is false that my husband is what you call a Communist. He knows not the meaning of the word. I have heard nothing of his having assaulted a soldier and released a prisoner. He said nothing of that in his letter to me; and I do not believe it is true that he has done such a thing. But, Monsieur, this man, Lucien Pierrot, is a vile wretch, who swears the lives of innocent men away for gain, and is unworthy of credence. He has vowed vengeance against my husband and me because I refused to listen to his base importunities; and then blushing with shame amidst her distress, she related to the préfet the story of Lucien's conduct to her previous to her marriage. While she was speaking, the daughter of the préfet, a young and pretty girl of fifteen years, entered the room, and approaching her father, said: 'Dear papa, I am come to wish you good-night.' Then perceiving Madeleine for the first time, she became silent, and stood gazing pitifully upon the young fisherwoman from behind her father's chair.

'It is sad—very sad, my poor woman,' said the préfet, when Madeleine had ended her story; 'but, as I have told you, I have no power to interfere in the prisoner's behalf. Your husband is charged with a military offence. He will be tried by court-martial to-morrow morning. I dare not bid you hope for his acquittal. Such wretches as the man Pierrot are necessary to the government in such times as this. His oath will be taken by the members of the court-martial in preference to that of the accused, even though they regard the accuser with contempt. The trial will be brief, and the sentence of the court-martial will be immediately carried into effect. It is quite impossible for me to say or do anything in behalf of your husband that will be of the least service to him.'

'Ah, Monsieur,' sighed Madeleine, 'at what hour to-morrow will the trial take place?'

'At seven o'clock. It will likely be over by nine o'clock; and at noon the sentence of the court will be carried out. A great number of prisoners await their trial by court-martial to-morrow.'

Madeleine, weeping bitterly, threw herself on her knees before the préfet. 'Monsieur, Monsieur!' she cried, 'it is terrible. Men are wolves. They have no pity. But can heaven permit such injustice? Monsieur, as you hope for mercy on the last great day, intercede for my innocent husband! Save him, Monsieur, and I will pray for you, and will teach my innocent babe to pray for you and yours so long as we may live.'

'I pity you with all my heart,' replied the préfet, in a tone of deep sympathy; 'but again I assure you I can do nothing for you; I am powerless to help you. Paris is under martial law. The civil authorities are superseded for the time being by the military. I cannot interfere with the trial or sentence of a court-martial.' He advanced towards the suppliant young wife, and held forth his hand to assist her to rise; but Madeleine, overcome by the intensity of her affliction, fainted, and sank down on the floor.

The préfet rang the bell, and when the servant appeared, bade him send some of the female domestics to the assistance of the poor woman. The women came; and Madeleine, having partially recovered consciousness, was tenderly assisted from the room. 'Take care of her, poor creature,' said the préfet. 'Let her rest a while before she goes away; and if she will partake of it, give her some refreshment.'

'Poor woman! so young, and so pretty!' he soliloquised, when the servants had withdrawn with the agonised wife. 'I pity her sincerely; but I cannot assist her. Any interference on my part would be worse than useless.—Pauline, my love,' he went on, looking round for his daughter, whom he now recollected had entered the room while the young woman was kneeling before him.

But Pauline had disappeared; she had quitted the room with the servants and their helpless, sorrowing burden.

The sous-préfet did not resume the perusal of his journal. He was a man of kindly feelings, despite the hardening influences to which he was constantly subjected through his official position; and though he had his doubts, as men in his position always have in such cases, he was inclined to believe that Antoine had been falsely and maliciously accused. Yet he felt that he could not interfere in the prisoner's behalf.

At the end of half an hour, his daughter re-entered the room.

'Ah, Pauline, my darling, where hast thou been?' he cried. 'Thou wert here awhile since. Why didst thou go away, my child?'

'Papa,' replied the young girl, drawing near to her father, and placing her arm round his neck, 'I went after that poor young fisherwoman.'

'But the servants will take good care of her, my pet.'

'Yes, dear papa; but I took her to my own apartment and made her tell me *all* her story. She dared not tell you all. She was frightened, poor thing. O papa! it is so sad—so sad! I am sure, quite sure that the poor man is innocent of the political crimes imputed to him; and I have made the poor young wife promise to come here early to-morrow. I told her you would try to do something for her. And you *will*—will you not, dear papa, for my sake?'

'Pauline, darling, you have done very wrong; you have encouraged the poor woman to hope for assistance that I cannot render. I am powerless in the matter, as I have told her already—even if I were sure of the man's innocence.'

'Sure, papa!' exclaimed Pauline. 'Can you doubt? You will not doubt to-morrow, when you have heard all.'

'My darling,' answered the sous-préfet, 'no matter how strongly I may believe in the poor man's innocence, I can do nothing for him. He will be tried by court-martial in the morning, and in a few minutes will be either acquitted or condemned. They waste no time in these cases. If he be found guilty, as is most probable, he will be shot before noon.'

'Papa, you *must* do something,' persisted the young girl. 'There is always time till the last moment. You will restore the poor woman's husband to her. Think over what I have said.'

papa; and now, good-night;' and kissing her father, Pauline hastened from the room before the préfet could make any reply.

A RECEPTION AT THE VATICAN.

SINCE the establishment of United Italy, the Pope rarely leaves his own palace. Rather than occupy a secondary place in the marvellous city where his predecessors long sat supreme, and whence they ruled Christendom, he lives a life of splendid seclusion. The Vatican is an enormous pile of buildings adjoining St Peter's, comprising thousands of apartments, a hundred and fifty staircases, as also museums, and an almost fabulous amount of art treasures in painting, sculpture, and antiquities. Its exterior, though not beautiful, is imposing from its size; but on the interior is lavished everything that is magnificent and costly in adornment—the rarest and most splendid marbles, oriental alabaster, mosaic pavements—until the spectator is bewildered by the very extent of its richness. There are beautiful private gardens, in which the Pope is frequently carried in a sedan-chair; but at those times the public are rigorously excluded, so that the only opportunity of seeing him is by obtaining admission to an audience, and such permission is sparingly given.

On a certain Easter Monday morning, we set out for the Vatican in the dazzling sunlight of an Italian April; through the narrow, shady streets, with their picturesque groups of people, shifting and changing like the figures in a kaleidoscope. Soon we cross the Bridge of St Angelo, where Bernini's angels look on the yellow Tiber; then past the Castle of St Angelo with its look of hoary age; then lastly into the Piazza of St Peter, with its Egyptian obelisk and leaping fountains, half encircled by the immense colonnades which lead to the great church in the centre.

Descending from our carriage, and passing through the bronze gate, we enter the guardroom at the foot of the regal staircase, where the Guards, in their extraordinary dress of striped scarlet and yellow, are on duty. Our *permesso* was here inspected; and we then went up Bernini's beautiful staircase, with its fine columns and painted roof. After passing the equestrian statue of Constantine, we go through a bewildering succession of apartments and galleries, marshalled on at each turn by private servants of the Pope, in costumes of crimson velvet brocade. Next, we enter that wonderful series of frescoed chambers where the masterpieces of Raphael look down in colours scarcely faded since they left the great master's hand. On this occasion, however, one cannot pause to do more than glance at the 'School of Athens,' or the astounding 'Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple,' where the sacrilegious intruder seems absolutely hurled across the threshold of the sacred building. Last in succession is the Hall of Constantine, with the battle of the Ponte Molle, which changed the fate of the Empire from heathenism to Christianity. This Hall was painted by Giulio Romano, from Raphael's designs.

After passing through an antechamber, filled with chamberlains and other dignitaries, we were shown into the Geographical Gallery, where the audience was to take place. This Gallery, which

is not generally shown to the public, is of very great length, being about one hundred and sixty yards. The walls are entirely covered with frescoed maps, painted in a realistic way, with ships sailing on the blue seas, and the mountains and forests shaded-in. The effect is curious, and very beautiful. The roof is also frescoed; and the floor is of inlaid and highly polished marble. Rows of busts on pedestals against the walls, and seats painted to imitate marble, are its only furniture. The windows on one side look into the lovely private gardens.

We arrived a little before half-past eleven, the time fixed for the audience; and although it soon became evident that punctuality was not intended, the novelty of the scene was amply sufficient to prevent any feeling of weariness. Each person on arriving was shown to his or her place by an official. All the ladies present were in black dresses, with long black veils, worn over the head like Spanish mantillas. The gentlemen were in evening dress. The clerical element in the assemblage was very strong—priests from various lands; sandalled monks of different orders, with rosary at girdle, and robes of white or brown according to their rule, waiting what to them was a great event. Next to us was a group of French priests, who were going as missionaries beyond the borders of civilisation in the far East, who had come to receive a special benediction from the Holy Father before leaving for their dangerous work. A little farther off was a venerable monk, whose long silvery beard and hair, and bent form, seemed to speak of many years beyond the usual age of man. He had come a long distance to have an interview with the head of his Church. Nearly all the persons present had objects to be blessed by the Pope, chiefly rosaries; but many had medallions and crucifixes, and not a few little models of the bronze statue of St Peter in the church—the statue whose toe is so often and so reverently kissed, that it had to be renewed, and is again being worn away. The missionaries next us had an immense number of rosaries to take out with them.

After waiting more than two hours, the doors at the farther end of the gallery were opened, and a brilliant group appeared in the opening. The distance was so great that we could not distinctly see its several parts, only a general effect of bright colours, in which splendid uniforms predominated. This group at first appeared to be stationary; then, after a time, we became conscious it was moving, but so slowly and with such frequent pauses, as to be almost imperceptible. By degrees it came nearer, and we saw two chamberlains walking backwards; then came some of the Guardia Nobile, the Pope's bodyguard, each member of which is a nobleman, and wears a tall crested helmet like an old Roman. Then came a number of stately dignitaries in violet robes, Cardinals and Monsignors; and at last we caught a glimpse in the centre of a small figure entirely in white—his Holiness himself—then more violet robes, and lastly, more guards, closing the procession. It was impossible to see that slowly advancing figure, with its imposing surroundings, without being most powerfully impressed. He is the representative of a power—a spiritual hierarchy—which, as Macaulay says, 'can certainly boast of a far longer succession

than any dignity in the world; linking together the two great ages of human civilisation. Our modern feudal kings are mere upstarts compared with the successors in regular order, not, to be sure, of Peter, but of Sylvester and Leo the Great.'

A Monsignor who walked by the side of the Pope, asked the name, nationality, and religion of each person, for the information of his Holiness, who then said a few words. He speaks only Italian and French. He had a short conversation in the latter language with the priests next us, which of course we could distinctly hear. They spoke of their intended mission; and he replied that the merit of such actions lay in the intention, less than in their successful performance.

The Pope is small and frail in figure, with the whitest and most bleached-looking complexion it is possible to conceive. One could scarcely imagine him able to go through the prolonged fatigue entailed by even such a ceremony as that in which we saw him. His manner is most gracious and pleasing, and his expression of countenance benevolent. He was dressed in a white cloth robe with small cape, white skull-cap, and white shoes embroidered with a cross; a white silk sash, with gold-fringed ends, round his waist. A large cross of magnificent emeralds was the only spot of colour in his attire. The Pontifical ring, which it is the etiquette to kiss, was especially splendid, and appeared to have the head of St Peter engraved upon it. A dignitary carried his scarlet cloak; and another, the large hat of the same colour, tied up and edged with gold cord. He remained a few minutes in colloquy with our party, which happened to be the last in the assembly. Then turning round to face the gathering, he blessed it collectively, with outstretched arms, in the name of the Trinity. The whole of the persons present, guards and attendants, knelt to receive the benediction. This closed the ceremony.

Immediately thereafter, the cloak was placed upon his shoulders by the official who carried it; and then, having been covered by the hat in like manner, he disappeared through the door opposite to the one by which he entered, his retinue following. The audience was at an end. We returned, by a different suite of rooms, to the Scala Regia, which we descended, much pleased with our glimpse of the Papal Court as witnessed in a Reception at the Vatican.

READY RETORTS.

THE number of witty replies, ready retorts, and 'good things' generally attributed to Swift, Foote, Sydney Smith, Sheridan, and other departed celebrities, would doubtless considerably astonish those gentlemen, were they to return to life. Happy thoughts are not confined to acknowledged wits, however. Most of us have sometimes had occasion to say: 'What a good repartee such and such an answer would have been, had we only thought of it in time.' But there is the rub. It is not given to every one, perhaps fortunately for the general peace, to be as ready at retort, for example, as the critic to whom the following question was addressed by an artist: 'Don't you think it is about time I exhibited something?' 'Yes; a little talent, for instance,' was the reply.—To a grocer who had retired from business,

a friend said: 'My dear fellow, you are looking thin; idleness does not agree with you.' 'Well, no,' instantly replied the grocer; 'I don't weigh so much as I did.'

Another tradesman, a Quaker, who sold hats, was asked by a rustic the price of one. 'Fifteen shillings,' was the reply. The intending purchaser offered twelve shillings.

'As I live,' said the Quaker, 'I cannot afford to give it thee at that price.'

'As you live!' exclaimed the countryman; 'then live more moderately, my friend.'

A tailor and his son were doing a day's work at a farmhouse. The prudent housewife, to secure a good day's work, lighted candles when daylight began to fade. The tailor looked at his son and said: 'Jock, confound them that invented working by candlelight!' 'Ay,' replied young snip, 'or daylight either!'—'You have no idea of the hard work there is in this business,' said a canvasser to a shopkeeper. 'I tell you it is either talking or walking from morning till night.' 'Beg pardon,' replied the victim. 'I have a pretty distinct idea of the talking part of your programme. Now, please favour me with an exhibition of the walking part.'

A sarcastic question may sometimes do duty for the severest of replies. 'I never consider a dinner perfect without soup,' said one man to another; 'I always have soup when I dine.' 'And do you ever have anything else?' returned the other.—A punning retort is also at times very effective. 'I had no time to stuff the chicken,' apologised a landlady. 'Never mind, madam; it's tough enough as it is,' quickly replied the boarder.—Another landlady, who tried to be smart, was as effectually silenced. 'I think the goose has the advantage of you,' she remarked to an expert boarder who was carving. 'Guess it has, mum, in age,' was the ready retort.

'Here, waiter; what do you call this you've brought me?' inquired a customer.

Waiter. 'Ham, sir; you ordered ham.'

Customer. 'When was it cooked?'

Waiter (snappishly). 'I don't know, sir; we don't put tags on with the date and time of cooking!'

Customer. 'You ought to. This ham was cooked thirty or forty years ago. Bring me some that was cooked this year.'

The customer does not at all times have the victory; sometimes it falls to the waiter. A bustling, fussy 'commercial,' waiting impatiently for his dinner, called out to the waiter: 'John, how long will that steak of mine be?' 'Why,' replied John quietly, 'about the usual length, sir—about eight inches.'

Two American gentlemen in the course of their travels stopped at a small café in the suburbs of Paris, for refreshments. Their repast was a light one, consisting of tea, toast, and eggs; but the bill was a heavy one—nine francs in all. 'Garçon,' exclaimed one of the tourists, 'how's this? Please, explain.'

'Well you see, Messieurs,' explained the waiter—'two francs for the tea and toast, and seven francs for the eggs.'

'Ah, then, eggs are very scarce about here?'

'No, Monsieur; eggs are not scarce, but Americans are!'

'What do you mean by a cat-and-dog life?'

said a husband to his angry wife. 'Look at Carlo and Kitty asleep on the rug; I wish men lived half as agreeably with their wives.' 'Stop!' said the lady. 'Tie them together, and see how they will agree!'—As ready, but more curious, was the reply of a nurse. She was telling about a man who had become so worn-out through intemperance that he could not keep any food on his stomach, when one of her listeners asked: 'What does he live on, then?' 'On his relations, ma'am,' was the answer.

The replies given by impulsive children when scolded and so forth, are often as apt as they are entertaining. In the country, for instance, a bright little girl was sent to get some eggs, and on her way back stumbled and fell, making sad havoc among the contents of her basket. 'Won't you catch it when you get home though!' exclaimed her companion. 'No; indeed I won't,' she answered; 'I've got a grandmother.'—'Sophy, if you don't be quiet, I shall have to whip you,' said the father of a large family, who always left the disagreeable duty of punishing the unruly to his wife. 'Pooh!' contemptuously retorted the little incorrigible he addressed, tossing her curly head—'you ain't the mother.'—'How old are you, my little man?' asked a gentleman of a youngster of three years, to whom he was being introduced. 'I'm not old,' replied the little man; 'I'm almost new.'

Boys retorts are, as may be expected, generally of the rude kind; as when a woman said to a youngster who had been impudent to her: 'Little boy, have you a mother?' 'No; but Dad wouldn't marry you if there wasn't a house-keeper in the whole blessed land,' was the reply.—'Charley,' said a mother to her seven-year-old boy, 'you must not interrupt me when I am talking with ladies. You must wait till we stop, and then you can talk.' 'But you never stop!' retorted the boy.—Little Tommy was having his hair combed by his mother, and he grumbled at the operation. 'Why, Tommy, you oughtn't to make such a fuss. I don't, when my hair is combed.' 'Yes; but *your* hair ain't latched to your head.'

Equally pertinent was the answer given by a great musical composer to a remark. When a youth, he was clerk to a very rich but exceedingly commonplace, in fact stupid employer. One day, an acquaintance commiserated the clever lad on his position, saying: 'What a pity it is that you are not the master, and he your clerk.'—'Oh, my friend,' returned the youth, 'do not say that. If he were my clerk, what on earth could I do with him?'

Even clergymen cannot always hope to meet with the courtesy that draws the line at sharp rejoinders. 'If you can't keep awake,' said a parson to one of his hearers, 'when you feel drowsy, why don't you take a pinch of snuff?' 'I think,' was the shrewd reply, 'the snuff should be put into the sermon.'—Some years ago, we are told, the Isle of Sheppey being an inconsiderable parish, and the income not very large, the vicar came there but once a month. The parishioners being much displeased at this, desired their clerk, who was that year churchwarden also, to remonstrate with him as to his negligence. The clerk told the vicar the wishes of the parishioners; and the reply was: 'Well, well; tell them if they

give me ten pounds a year more, I will come to see them once a fortnight; and be sure to let me know their answer the next time I come.' The next time he did come, he accordingly asked, and the clerk answered: 'Sir, they say as how if you will excuse them ten pounds a year in their tithes, they will dispense with your coming at all!'

Members of the cloth are not always above severely criticising one another's failings. It is related of that most eloquent of English clergymen, Robert Hall, that he once—disgusted by the egotism and conceit of a preacher who, with a mixture of self-complacency and impudence, challenged his admiration of a sermon—was provoked to say: 'Yes; there was one very fine passage of your discourse, sir.' 'I am rejoiced to hear you say so; which was it?' 'Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit to the vestry.'

The legal profession may naturally be expected to develop the powers of repartee. There is a well-known anecdote of a judge saying, 'One at a time, gentlemen,' when a donkey brayed outside the court just as a lawyer was eloquently holding forth; and that the lawyer retaliated later on by remarking, 'There was a strange echo in court,' on the judge, when interrupted, absently inquiring the cause of the very same noise.

Another story, in which the same too often despised animal figures, may not be so well known. A country laird, who had lately been elected to the office of a county magistrate, meeting a clerical gentleman on horseback, attempted jocularity by remarking that he was more ambitious than his Master, who was content to ride upon an ass. 'They canna be gotten noo,' said the minister; 'for they're a' made justices of the peace.'

Even lawyers, with all their smartness and assurance, don't always come off best in a wordy duel. An attorney said to an Irishman, his client: 'Why don't you pay me that six-and-eight-pence?' 'Why, faith, because I do not owe it to you.' 'Not owe it to me? Yes, you do; it's for the opinion you had of me.' 'That's good, indeed,' rejoined Pat, 'when I never had any opinion of you in all my life.'—Equally good was the retort made to Serjeant Cockle by a witness. In a trial of a right of fishery, he asked the witness: 'Don't you love fish?' 'Ay,' replied the witness, with a grin; 'but I dunna like Cockle sauce with it!'

An agent canvassing a voter and getting many evasive replies to his cross-examination, at last exclaimed sharply: 'Confound your quibbling! Tell me, then, what your opinions are—your conscientious opinions, I mean.'—'They are the same as my landlord's.'—'And what are your landlord's opinions?'—'Faix, his opinion is that I won't pay him the last half-year's rent; and I'm of the same opinion myself.'

The Irishman who on asking an intruder in his cabin what he wanted, and receiving the answer, 'Nothing,' said he would find it in the jug where the whisky was, had an equal in promptness in a New-Yorker, whom an 'uncertain' acquaintance addressed as follows: 'I'm a little short, and would like to ask you a conundrum in mental arithmetic.'—'Proceed,' observed the gentleman.—'Well,' said the 'short' man, 'suppose you had ten dollars in your pocket, and I should ask you for five dollars, how much would remain?'—'Ten dollars,' was the prompt answer.

'What do you mean by standing there with your hands in your pockets?' asked an employer, addressing a rather indolent workman. 'Nothing much; 'spects you'd be making a noise if I had them in yours,' replied the incorrigible.—'Did you get her photo, when you were away?' said one Freshman to another. 'Well—ah!—the fact is,' returned his companion, 'she gave me her negative.'

'How did you learn that graceful attitude?' said a gentleman to an intoxicated fellow leaning in a maudlin fashion against a post. 'I have been practising at a glass,' was the reply.—Remarkable quickness at repartee was displayed by an actor at the Belleville theatre, when some one threw the head of a goose on the stage. Advancing to the front, the player said: 'Gentlemen, if any one amongst you has lost his head, do not be uneasy, for I will restore it at the conclusion of the performance.'

Not many would feel in much humour for joking, we should think, after the excitement of catching a thief in one's house, yet here is an instance to the contrary. A burglar was caught by a gentleman in the back drawing-room, and a policeman sent for at once. 'You ought to be grateful to me,' said the thief, 'instead of treating me like this 'ere. I only came in to tell you the front-door was open, and I was afeared you'd get robbed.'—'Excellent reasoning, no doubt, my friend,' said the householder; 'but on wrong premises, I fancy!'

A lady who asked a sailor why a ship was called 'she,' received the ungallant reply, that it was because her rigging cost so much.—Equally smart was the reply of the sea-captain who was invited to meet the Committee of a Society for the Evangelisation of Africa. When asked: 'Do the subjects of the king of Dahomey keep Sunday?' he replied: 'Yes, and everything else they can lay their hands on.'

Perhaps as much presence of mind as shown in any of the above instances was displayed on the following occasion. A young gentleman getting into a railway carriage, happened to press the foot of a young lady who was sitting next to the door. The damsel, contracting her pretty brow into a frown, ejaculated: 'You clumsy wretch!' Many men would have looked foolish and apologised; but he exclaimed: 'My dear young lady, you should have feet large enough to be seen, and then they wouldn't be trodden upon.' Her frowns instantly changed into smiles, and the injury was forgotten.

FAIRYLAND AND FAIRIES.

WHERE is Fairyland? There are no finger-posts anywhere pointing to it. It is not in Murray's Guides. But—how, we hardly know—we are sometimes lucky enough to be taken thither by the poets and the children; for, oddly enough, the poets and the children are like each other, and often walk the same way. True, the Scientific Societies would reduce Fairyland to an exhalation of fancy, and blow the fairies off in vapour. But we object to seeing our most precious conceptions resolved into their original elements, and then destroyed beyond help; though we should like to know, in the proper place and season, how those same conceptions originate, and even

what stuff they are made of. So we leave the learned wights with their destructive crucibles; and as becomes pilgrims to Fairyland, choose our company among more ardent and simple folk—the poets and the children. Where, then, is Fairyland, and why does it exist?

Chaucer places the realm of Faëry underground with Pluto and Proserpine. In the old days of romance, knights found it in the ocean island of Avalon, where, stepping ashore in darkness from wreck to wreck, they entered the lighted castle, peopled by beautiful maidens and men transformed by enchantment. In Spenser's time, this realm could not have been so far off, for he saw in it the shadow of England. A little later, Drayton imagined it high in air, poised by magic midway between the earth and the moon, with an aerial route, *vid* the moon, down to this world. His minute touch built up the palace with walls of deftly mortised spiders' legs; and all its architectural arrangements, chiefly of insect material, were the strangest ever imagined:

The windows, of the eyes of cats;
And for the roof, instead of slats,
Is covered with the skins of bats
With moonshine that are gilded.

No doubt it was from such a palace, but with more of beauty and less of the grotesque in its furniture, that Tom Hood's fairy, after two centuries and more, began to come down the moon-beam-path, bringing the dreams of little children. She uses the old road that Drayton found; but her lightness and brightness are beyond his fancy:

A little Fairy comes at night;
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,
With silver spots upon her wings;
And from the moon she flutters down.

Drayton's courtiers and ladies of 'the Fairy court' were little creatures that could huddle together and hide in an empty nut-shell; and littleness and lightness are by this time permanent attributes of the fairy creation. But in the early history of Fairyland, its people were of larger growth. In the old Gallic and Breton romances, they were merely men and women possessed of magical powers; and in Brittany—a country intimately connected with the rise of Fairyland—the fairies, that are supposed to haunt the *landes* and glide round the Druidic stones by night, are not tricky elves, but tall maidens of more than mortal stature, willing to enchant and marry mortal men.

Before the Elizabethan age, while the fairies were holding their own, and growing rather than dwindling in Western France, the merry sprites and elves were in England driving the full-grown enchanters from the field. But with Shakspeare came a patent of immortality to the little harmless crew. He left the bounds of Fairyland indefinitely fixed; but he fixed for ever as the property of the poet the most picturesque parts of the popular belief. For evermore the 'shrewd and knavish' Puck was to be 'the merry wanderer of the night,' with an historic reputation for destroying the peace of village maids and housewives; tangling the skein of love among mortals; enjoying their discomfiture at his wiles, and even setting them astray when he means well. Evermore, Oberon and Titania will preserve in poetry their character for miffs and tiffs, love and

jealousy, almost in play—a bright-coloured reflection of human passions, without their depth or their sorrows. And evermore the fairies will have their allotted work to do, making elves' coats out of the leathern wings of bats, teasing away the owl that hoots and wonders at their revels, dewing the rings that are to be dauced on at night, and killing cankers in the rose-buds; and henceforth they will always be small enough to creep into acorn-cups. By *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Fairyland became an indestructible reality in the region of fancy; through poetry the cultured must know it for ever; even when the unlettered, who once believed in it most, may forget it completely.

The poets and the children have kept up this race of beautiful imaginary beings for the very same reason. Both have strong imagination; both in a different manner have an attraction towards wonders and bright fancies; to both the commonplace is but dull ground. The early poets and writers of romance embalmed the popular beliefs for the sake of the facility they afforded for exercising invention in describing the marvellous, and for the easy working out of stories of wonder. The children have the same delight in the marvellous, and the same preference for a tale wherein the most startling wonders are possible. To the first writers who chronicled fairy achievements, in the time when Faëry only signified something of 'glamour might,' this wonder-working was not so great a strain upon the fancy of reasoning minds, as it is now in these more scientific ages. In the same way the marvels of children's tales are interesting to the inexperienced listeners, because they do not seem so wildly impossible as to forbid interest. It has been well said that a little child in a garden would not be much astonished if a stone urn changed into a dragon among the grass; though in truth, science has greater wonders in store for the child yet, and travel has more beautiful sights to astonish him, than are to be found in any magic changes, or in the fancied picture of a fairy tale. Very strangely, too, we send the word back to its mediæval meaning when we name many of the nursery stories, *fairy tales*; for stories like Red Riding Hood do not deal with fairies, but with marvels. Until the nature of children—that is, until human nature—changes, stories of wonder will be craved by the young; and until our ideas of poetic thought become completely altered, there will be space kept in the realms of poetry for the bright airy creatures that live in moonlight, familiar with flowers and insects.

From the maturer popular belief, they are fast fading away. Weakly and puny infants are no longer supposed to be fairy changelings, except in districts so remote that the newspapers cannot reach them, nor the new broom of the School Boards sweep them clean. Even the fairies of the Border, about whom Sir Walter Scott told us, and the fairies of the Sister Island—familiarly yet deferentially called 'the good people'—are fast vanishing for ever. It is Fairyland itself that cannot be destroyed, since the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is immortal with its quaint fancies, and human childhood with its needs. As for the Fairyland of the Christmas theatres, it is but an imperfect imitation of the original.

In the lath-and-canvas Fairyland, with stage carpenters, ropes and pulleys, lime-lights and ballet-girls, there is produced in the transformation scene a certain amount of beautiful scenery changing under many-coloured lights. But the moonlit elfin scene 'laid like a dream upon the green earth's lap,' is very different from the spectacle in glare and heat behind the footlights; the studied dance of the *corps de ballet* is not the circling roundel among grass and mushrooms; the artificial fairies are not like the happy sprites of Nature that do kind turns to drooping flowers, and have a speaking acquaintance with every insect.

As unlike in the opposite extreme, but perfectly original and charming, was the well-known Fairyland in the cloud region above the 'Wicked World,' devised in contrast to the land of ballets, and as a shadow of a more real world off the boards and beneath the clouds. 'A pleasant dreamy land, with no bright colour in it—a land where it is always bright moonlight—a land where there is nothing whatever to do but to sit and chat with good, pleasant-looking people, who like a joke, and can make one, and can take one too—a land where there is no such thing as hunger, sleep, fatigue, illness, or old age—a land where no collars or boots are worn—a land where there is no love-making, but plenty of innocent love ready-made.' This most pleasant of all invented Fairylands is peopled by women supremely lovely—a return to the oldest Fairylands of romance, but with some difference of manners and customs. 'They wear long robes high in the throat, falling loosely and gracefully to the very feet, and each fairy has a necklace of the very purest diamonds. They have wings—large soft downy wings—six feet high like the wings of angels;' and by some spiritual contrivance, it is stated, these wings do not crackle or crumple under the fairies when they sit down.

We should like to hear more tales of such Fairylands with fairies of homely name—Fairy Mary the Queen, and Mattie, and Kate; but so far, this is an excellent example of the breadth of invention possible in dealing with fairy nature, and the flights of fancy that yet may come when the name is merely used to suggest the fair and the marvellous in an unearthly creation. How it is that fairies in even the wildest fancies must be fair unless they be evil, is hinted as far back as the old romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, where we find the origin of their universal beauty. At that time, says the romance, all were called fays who dealt in charms and enchantments, and many such there were in Great Britain; and knowing the power and virtue that lies in wood, stones, and herbs, they were able to be young, beautiful, and richly dressed, just as they devised. It seems rather a pity to interfere with this beautiful race, and take their splendour to pieces, by disputing whether they were *peris* of Persia, or Hebrew spirits, or Roman Fates, or Gallie *fées*, in their first origin; whether they were the nymphs and fauns with which untaught races were wont to people the woods and fountains, and by whose doings they interpreted Nature's mysteries; or whether, as one theory goes, they were puny cave-men, who descended upon their civilised neighbours from seemingly mysterious regions, and from a still more mysterious

life. The analysis of their name, or the questions of psychologists as to why man's mind invented them, after all leaves room for more poetic and more childlike musings about the bright tradition; and wherever they came from, but one thing is certain—that they belong in a peculiar manner to the poets and the small folk. These have appropriated Fairyland, for good reasons of their own, as we have seen; and in their possession the old tradition has yet to develop in the future, perhaps through inexhaustible phases of the fantastic and the beautiful.

And even when the poets, professionally so-called, have given up the fairies, and have ceased to wave magic wands over the land where fairies dwell, we feel sure the children—'your only true poets,' as Macaulay says—will remain faithful to the old beliefs; and little eyes will sparkle, and little faces brighten as of old, when the beneficent fairy-form is once more conjured up before them, to relieve some persecuted hero in his sore distress, or to spread protecting wings round some beautiful heroine whom bad sisters hate, and ugly witch-women seek to destroy. More than this, it would be wrong to deprive children of their fairy intimates, even had we the power to do so. It would indeed be an act of positive cruelty. It would be depriving many a sensitive, imaginative child of its chief source of comfort and pleasurable reflection amid the little cares, and tiny, but not less real vexations, of its child-life. The belief in the good spirits called Fairies is with children a kind of religion—often more sincere and pure-hearted than much of our grown-up religion is; and the consciousness that these bright-eyed, sylph-like creatures, with their snow-white drapery and their angel-wings, are ever hovering around in love and tender pity, brings hope and sweet comfort to the darker and sadder hours of many a little life, and opens out the child-heart in its time of trouble as the sunshine of morning opens out the daisies.

SHADOWS.

A burst of golden sunshine,
A whispering of the leaves,
A music-ripple on the brook,
A joy, a wonder in each nook;
A sweeping shadow o'er the land,
A flushing of the tree-tops,
A crimsoning of the lake,
A peaceful mildness in the air,
A thought of hidden mysteries there,
A glorious fading of the sun—
A summer's day is done.

A joy in childhood's playthings,
A casting them aside;
A flash of golden youth-hood's hour,
When joy breaks through the passing shower;
A castle-building in the air;
A cherished hope defeated;
A smile, a joy, a doubt,
A gleam, reflected from the past;
A sigh upon its bosom cast;
A mystery of a world unknown;
And then—a soul has flown.

A. ARMSTRONG.

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THE RACE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

FORTY-FIVE years ago a steamer named the *Great Western* lay fitting out in the harbour of Bristol. She was of no great size according to our ideas, being only two hundred and twelve feet long; but the eyes of the mercantile world were directed to her, as she was the first steamer built for service on the Atlantic, and the interest was all the greater that the question was not, How long will she take to make the voyage to New York? but, Will she manage to steam across the Atlantic at all? There are still among us those who can tell of the eager expectation with which the result of the attempt was awaited; and the rejoicing that took place when the news at last reached our shores, that on the 23d April, 1838, the *Great Western* had arrived in safety at New York, and that the great problem of ocean steam-navigation was solved.

It is nearly half a century since then; but the interest taken by the British public in the doings of the Atlantic steamers has never flagged. Every fresh addition to the fleet of one of the leading Companies is honoured by a paragraph in the newspapers; the illustrated periodicals give woodcuts, showing the ship in question careering along in a rolling sea under full steam and with all sail set; she is opened for inspection, and thousands flock to admire her saloons and deck arrangements, or to gaze open-mouthed at her immense engines. She starts on her maiden voyage, and the shipping intelligence column is scanned day by day; and when eventually the news comes that she has, by some odd minutes, made the fastest run on record, it is echoed to the farthest extremities of the land.

It is this interest on the part of the public in the steamers of the great rival Companies that contest the honours of the ocean, which induces us at this time to give a slight sketch of the history of the Atlantic steamship traffic. Naval architecture is to a large extent an experimental science; the law of the survival of the fittest, whatever be its power on shore, is absolute on the

high seas. This is in no case better illustrated than in that of the Atlantic steamship the *Great Western*, the clumsy appearance of which may be seen in the engravings of the period, bearing but little resemblance to the graceful outline of a modern liner. The steps by which this great change has come about we shall now attempt to follow.

The *Great Western* of 1838 was a wooden paddle-steamer of twelve hundred tons, rigged with four masts and a very pronounced funnel, the standard type, however, of the period. Unlike most first attempts, she proved a success both as to her sea-going qualities and financially. Forty guineas were readily paid as passage-money in her saloon; and five pounds per ton freight for goods was not at all out of the way; while the passage from Bristol to New York averaged sixteen days one hour, and the homeward run thirteen days seven and a half hours.

No sooner did it become evident that the navigation of the Atlantic by steam was a success, than the question of carrying the mails came forward. Tenders were asked; and that of Mr Cunard of Liverpool being accepted, four new steamers specially designed for the traffic were ordered. These four steamers were built on the Clyde; and in the summer of 1840, the first of them, the *Britannia*, began to run. Before long a monthly steam-packet was despatched from Liverpool to Halifax, Nova Scotia. In these days the estimate of the requirements of the mail and passenger service between the two continents was decidedly moderate, as four steamships of only eleven hundred and forty tons each were thought sufficient. But before ten years had elapsed, the new Company, now celebrated as the 'Cunard Line,' had tripled the number of their vessels, increased the total tonnage fourfold, and established regular services to New York and Boston.

The year 1845 is memorable in the annals of Atlantic steam-navigation, as during it the first iron screw-steamer began to run. This was the *Great Britain*, a truly wonderful vessel for her day. Her breadth was fifty-one feet—only one

foot less than that of the *City of Rome*; and her length two hundred and eighty-nine feet. While her speed was equal to that of her paddle-wheel rivals, her working expenses were relatively less; and the public came in for the benefit in the shape of reduced fares. The *Great Britain* continued in active service, although not on the Atlantic, long after her wooden contemporaries had been consigned to the breaking-up yard, and quite recently was an object of interest as she lay in the basins at Birkenhead.

For nearly ten years after the *Great Western* had led the way across the Atlantic, British-built steamships had a monopoly of the traffic; but in 1847 the Americans bethought themselves of winning honour; and accordingly, after their national style, in June of that year a native-built steamship named the *Washington* was started to run alongside the *Britannia*. Any amount of 'tall talk' heralded the event; but in the result the *Britannia* arrived two clear days before her rival. The lesson was not thrown away on Brother Jonathan: full particulars of the best steamships of the Cunard Company were obtained; larger vessels, with still more powerful engines, were designed and placed on the stocks; and in May 1850, the *Arctic*, the first steamship of the once famous 'Collins Line,' arrived at Liverpool. This vessel was two hundred and seventy-seven feet long, and two thousand eight hundred and sixty tons; the *Asia*, the favourite Cunard liner of the day, being two hundred and sixty-six feet long, and two thousand two hundred and twenty-six tons. Starting with the valuable experience of ten years of Atlantic steaming, it is not to be wondered at that the 'Collins' steamers were a success as far as sea-going was concerned. The results of the running between Liverpool and New York for the twelve months ending June 1852, gave an average for the Cunard of twelve days six hours forty-one minutes out, and ten days seventeen hours thirty minutes home; while the Collins averaged eleven days fifteen hours two minutes out, and eleven days home—thus showing an advantage of four and a half hours on the average out and home in favour of the American ships. Great were the rejoicings on the other side of the Atlantic; but the fact that the *Arctic* and her sister-vessels had cost far too much money ever to prove commercially successful, was completely lost sight of. The Cunard Company did not give up the contest, however; but, like Britons, set to work again. In 1852 the *Arabia*, a steamer two hundred and eighty-five feet long, two thousand four hundred tons register, and more powerful than the best of the Collins Line, began to run; and three years later, the *Persia*, an iron steamer, three hundred and fifty feet long, and three thousand seven hundred and sixty-six tons—the largest vessel then afloat—was added to the fleet. The *Persia* soon made her capabilities known; she averaged eleven days two and three-quarter hours for the passage out, and nine days fourteen hours home. The average passage of the Cunard fleet was reduced to five hours under that of the Collins; and the laurels of the Atlantic passed to the British, with whom they have since remained.

For several years longer the American Company kept up a gallant struggle; but misfortune attended it; the *Pacific*, one of their steamers,

disappeared at sea in the winter of 1856; the others did not pay expenses; and Congress finally withdrawing the subsidy which it had granted, the Collins liners in 1858 ceased to run.

The year 1850 saw another and more successful competitor to the Cunard Company in the *City of Glasgow*, a vessel of sixteen hundred tons, the pioneer steamship of the now famed 'Inman Line.' This vessel, as were all her successors, was a screw-steamer; and to the superior economy of this system is no doubt largely due the fact that the Inman Line, supported only by private enterprise, prospered during the same years that the Collins Line, backed by a government subsidy and the good-will of a nation, went to the wall. At the close of the year 1860, the fleet of the Inman Company numbered nine vessels, with a collective tonnage of seventeen thousand seven hundred; and the voyage between Queenstown and New York was performed by these in the average time of thirteen days nine hours forty-five minutes out, and eleven days twenty hours twenty-five minutes home. The advantages of Queenstown as a port of call were early recognised by this Company, whose steamers have called there regularly since 1859.

Galway, on the western coast of Ireland, stands at the head of the large and well-sheltered bay of the same name. Railway communication was opened to it from Dublin in 1851; and in the following years the possibility of making it the point of departure of the American mail was under discussion. A Company of Irish gentlemen was eventually formed; an offer to establish a line of steamers and carry the mails for a very moderate subsidy, was made to government; and in April 1859 the 'Royal Atlantic Steam-navigation Company' signed a contract to carry the mails from Galway to New York in eleven days two hours, and home in ten days. Four large steamers were forthwith ordered, and the service was opened in June 1860; but everything went wrong, one disaster after another occurring to the fleet. The purchase of the *Adriatic*, the crack steamer of the then recently defunct Collins Line, did not retrieve the position; and after only eleven months' running, the Company was wound up, and the prospect of Galway becoming the Liverpool of Ireland was crushed for a generation.

During the years 1860-61, the *Great Eastern*, the largest ship in the world, was tried as an Atlantic packet; but the experiment was too gigantic for the time; passengers were not forthcoming in sufficient numbers to occupy her hundreds of staterooms, nor cargo sufficient to fill her capacious holds; her working expenses, too, were heavy; and finally this unfortunate vessel was withdrawn.

In 1862, the *Scotia*, a paddle-steamer, three hundred and seventy-nine feet long, and one-fourth greater tonnage than her predecessor the *Persia*, was added to the Cunard fleet. This well-known ship, the last paddle-steamer built for service on the North Atlantic, and perhaps the largest of her type ever built, was for long the favourite on the route. She averaged after ten years' service nine days twenty hours Queenstown to New York, and nine days five hours home; and at the present moment, under the same name, but with altered appearance, being now fitted with a twin screw,

she does good service in the employ of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company.

The 'National Steam-navigation Company' was established in 1863, and for some time took the lead in introducing long ships. Starting with the *Holland*, of three hundred and ninety-five feet, in two years' time they added the *England*, four hundred and thirty-eight feet long, a vessel which for seven years was unsurpassed in size by any other steamer on the Atlantic service.

The fourth in seniority of the Liverpool and New York steamship Companies, the *Guion Line*, was established in 1866, their first ship being the *Manhattan*. The vessels of this Company have recently become noticeable for their size and speed.

The year 1870 brought into the field a formidable rival to the older lines in the 'Oceanic Steam-navigation Company,' popularly known as the 'White Star Line.' The vessels of this Company were specially designed with a view to minimise the time of passage between the two continents, and were highly successful; the result of the running of the White Star liners between Queenstown and New York for the year 1873 giving an average of nine days nineteen hours forty-eight minutes out, and eight days twenty-two hours thirty-nine minutes home. The Cunard fleet during the same year averaged ten days sixteen hours fifty-four minutes out, and nine days seven hours fifty-nine minutes home; and the Inman in 1870 averaged ten days fourteen hours twenty-two minutes out, and nine days sixteen hours eight minutes home. It was clearly necessary for the senior Companies to keep pace with the times. A season of active building resulted, and by the close of 1875 the Inman Company had added to their fleet four splendid steamships, of a total tonnage of nineteen thousand two hundred, the last and largest being the *City of Berlin*, four hundred and eighty-eight feet long, the largest ship then afloat excepting the *Great Eastern*. During the same period the Cunard Company built the well-known favourites *Bothnia* and *Scythia*; but the Oceanic Company produced the *Britannic* and *Germanic*, and so the White Star still led the way.

The well-remembered years of commercial depression followed, during which the Atlantic trade suffered as much as any other; but in the middle of the dull time, the Cunard Company, believing that a business that had prospered in their hands for nearly forty years had still a future, prepared for a revival by building the *Gallia*, one of the finest of their present fleet, and fully a match in speed for any other vessel then on the Atlantic.

The *Guion Line* now came to the front for the first time, and the famous *Arizona* attracted crowds at Liverpool, as she returned from the 'fastest passage on record.' Business brightened, and a season of building again commenced. The Cunard Company kept up their reputation with the *Servia*, five hundred and fifteen feet long, and ten thousand five hundred horse-power, beyond dispute the most perfect Atlantic steamship yet produced, being built of steel, and having her safety well provided for in her complete double bottom and numerous water-

tight bulkheads. The Inman Company built the *City of Rome*, five hundred and sixty feet long, and eight thousand four hundred tons, a larger vessel than the *Servia*, but with no greater power; while the owners of the *Arizona* prepared to eclipse everything with the *Alaska*, a vessel two feet less beam, and fifteen feet shorter than the *Servia*, but with practically the same power. These three vessels made their first voyage towards the close of last summer; and in order to watch their effect in reducing the time of the Atlantic passage, we note that during 1880 the White Star steamers averaged nine days and twenty-four minutes out, and eight days seventeen hours twenty-six minutes home; the Inman, the only other Company of which the results have hitherto been made known, averaging nine days nine hours thirty-two minutes out, and nine days three hours home.

During the present summer, the rival steamers are all being well and fairly tested, and the interest, in their speed especially, never seems to flag. In the beginning of June, the *Alaska* made the run to Queenstown in six days twenty-one hours thirty minutes, and subsequently from Queenstown to New York in six days twenty hours; thus more than realising the long-awaited-for seven days' passage. The *Servia*, as tried on the measured mile, ran a trifle under eighteen knots; and the *City of Rome*, with her elaborate six-cylinder engines, may possibly rival this speed. The distance from New York to Queenstown may be taken at two thousand seven hundred and ninety nautical miles; to make the passage, therefore, in seven days requires an average speed of sixteen and two-third knots per hour—a high speed certainly, as the fast Kingston and Holyhead mail-steamers average no more than sixteen.

We have as yet spoken only of those Atlantic steamship Companies whose vessels run from Liverpool to New York, as it is to these alone that the competition in speed, so far as British-owned steamers are concerned, has been made. Our sketch, however, would not be complete without a short reference to other Companies, whose steamers, although not specially renowned for quick passages, have done excellent public service.

Amongst these we may mention the well-known 'Allan Line,' which from the year 1856 has kept up a regular service of steamers to Quebec or Montreal in summer, and Portland, Maine, in winter. The Allan Line runs steamers both from Liverpool and Glasgow, and now possesses a fleet equal, so far as efficiency and the comfort of passengers are concerned, to any other on the Atlantic.

The equally well-known 'Anchor Line' commenced in a small way in 1856 running between Glasgow and Quebec; and nine years later began the present service to New York. A steamer of very modest dimensions, despatched once a fortnight, was then sufficient for a trade that has developed to such an extent that recent summers have seen two Anchor liners of four thousand tons each, besides a supplementary steamer, leave the Clyde for New York in a single week, laden in many cases with emigrants. Economy is the order of the day in the North, the rates both for goods and passengers being usually less—often

considerably less—than those from Liverpool; and during the last few years, thousands of emigrants from Northern and Central Europe have travelled *via* the Leith and Glasgow route to find a home in the Great West.

Within more recent times, the 'State Line' started with a well-equipped fleet to compete with the 'Anchor,' and has had a fair share of public favour. The 'Monarch Line,' running between London and New York, is as an undertaking in its infancy. The steamers of this Company were designed largely with a view to the carriage of live-stock; and it may be remembered that the much-talked-of Jumbo left our shores as a passenger in one of them. At Bristol, within the last few years, we have seen in the revival of the once famous 'Great Western Steamship Company' an attempt; we are happy to believe so far successful, to bring again a portion of the tide of commerce that once flowed from the West through the old city on the banks of the Avon. The go-ahead Cardiff has tried a line of steamers on its own account; we are unable to say with what degree of success; and the wonderfully developed port of Barrow owns another, running in conjunction with the Anchor Line.

The South Coast of England is well supplied by the Companies whose headquarters are at Havre, Rotterdam, Bremen, and Hamburg, the steamers as a rule being British-built. Grimsby also comes in for a share; and on the whole we may say that if any resident in the British Isles has a desire to cross the Atlantic, he has no cause to complain of want of means of transit.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A MESSENGER FROM THE BANK.

GARLING meanwhile was in the street, walking to the Bank. To be free as he was and yet bound as he was, seemed an anomaly. He was going to surrender all his evil gains, and he was no worse nor better off than if he had lived a life of honesty, except in the estimation of men for whom he had no regard. The physical conditions were perhaps answerable for a part of his indifference. He was too worn out to feel keenly.

The usual greetings met him as he walked, and he responded to them in his usual way, by bending his bent head a little lower. Eminent capitalists remarked that morning that Garling was looking worn, and afterwards speaking in the light of later events, called upon other eminent capitalists to corroborate their assertions that they had made that observation. With no change in his common business manner, Garling secured the necessary forms, and returning, filled them up at his own table, sitting in the visitor's chair and facing the wonder-stricken Mr Barnes. Every now and then the promoted officer glanced at the resigned or—dismissed? Surely that last was impossible. Garling the long-headed, Garling the keen, the imperious, a match for any ten cashiers and managers in the City for acumen

and knowledge of the world, the pearl of business men, dismissed? Impossible. And Garling's manner set that thought at rest. He was just the same as ever, except that he had been used to be always so busy, and was now, by way of added wonder, idle.

When he had filled up the necessary forms and had everything ready for the merchant's inspection and use, he took up the daily paper which lay upon the table and feigned to read it. So far as he was concerned, it was an idle feigning, for he scarcely had the heart to read a word, but he sat there with stupendous patience and self-control and made no sign. Mr Barnes was evidently agitated by extreme curiosity; and Garling, though he had no particular purpose in foiling him, yet found the baffling of that curiosity a help to him. It whiled away the time, and suited the purposeless weary venom of his mood to sit there impassive and worry Barnes, and occasionally to meet Barnes's secret glance of wonder with one of keen discovery, and to make him uncomfortable in that way. But the fire of Remorse which in some hearts is only to be lighted by failure, was already in this pause beginning to burn in him, and to bring him a foretaste of its agonies. He had failed! In the very hour of his triumph he had failed. There was nine years' work wasted—thrown away. On the very results of his fraud, the great House would prosper, for he had worked for its prosperity that he might make his fraud the larger. Let him care as little as he might, let him be as indifferent as he would, it was ignominious. He had failed.

Failure is always bitter, but it is ten times bitter to the detected rogue. And now his own ingratitude began to gnaw at him; a crime spurned by his steel-armed conscience this nine years past, crept in through a crevice in the shattered armour and began to gnaw at him. And shame wreathed a first cold coil about his heart and sickened him. Then one thought suddenly took him by the very soul. This vengeance came upon him through his desertion of his wife and child, and one crime was made a whip to scourge another. Was the world a chaos of chances, after all, if such a thing as this could be? It was clear that Lumby had overheard the colloquy between that insolent Yankee and himself; clear that this had excited suspicion in his mind; clear that he had that night disturbed the ledger which held the account of Garling's first year of stewardship, and so had detected him. This heaped bitterness on bitterness, and set the sting of his long-deadened conscience to bite deeper. Bah! Why distress himself about that world-old superstition, long since destroyed by philosophy, and condemned by common-sense? Yet he could not shake off the fear, and it dug at the foundations of all his strength; for if it were truly founded, he had thrown away more than a rare plot and lost more than a great fortune.

Twelve o'clock at last.

'Mr Barnes,' said Garling, with an unconscious use of his old habit of command, 'be so good as to tell Mr Lumby that it is mid-day, and that I am ready for him.'

Mr Barnes, with an unconscious use of his old habit of obedience, arose and tapped at the

sliding panel. No answer. He tried to thrust it on one side; but the bolt was fastened. He rapped again, more loudly. No answer. He went round to the side-door and rapped at that, and still receiving no response, essayed to open it, but discovered that it also was fastened.

'He must have gone out,' said Barnes, returning; 'but I did not hear him.'

'Nor did I,' returned Garling. So that he performed his share of the contract, what did it matter to him whether the merchant kept his or left it unkept? If he chose to be ruined, let him be ruined. He would want money at the Bank soon enough, unless Garling were mistaken, and that could not come about very easily. The new cashier and the old sat on together until the luncheon-hour, when Mr Barnes went out. At two o'clock he returned, and sat down before a new pile of letters. One of these he handed to Garling.

'This concerns you, Mr Garling,' he said. It was Garling's roundabout note to Lumby, returned by the Liverpool firm, as having been inclosed to them in error. 'Clumsy fool!' said Garling to himself, not taking time to think that it mattered no longer. 'Why not have sent it straight on without inclosing it?' Then he smiled bitterly at his own want of apprehension, and absently tore the useless fraud across and threw it into the waste-paper basket. This futile reminder of all his futile plans stung him a little. There were stings enough within him, but he would not writhe. Mr Barnes was looking to see whether this odd note had any effect on Garling, but the defrauder held himself and gave no sign. When men came to know that he was defeated, they should have no chance to say that they had seen him shaken by defeat.

Another hour went by, and Mr Barnes, at Garling's bidding, again rapped at the sliding panel, and again tried both it and the door with no result. A new alarm was presenting itself to Garling. It was patent that if matters went too far, and the firm was shaken, the promise of immunity he held might after all avail him little. He sat thinking uneasily of this for another half-hour, and had almost resolved to rise and batter at the door until he received an answer—for he was certain that the merchant had fallen asleep within—when a clerk came hurriedly up announcing the arrival of a messenger from the Bank, who wished to see either Mr Lumby himself or Mr Garling on business of importance. Nobody could guess how enormously important that business was, half so well as Garling. The ruin he had planned might be coming on already—might well have begun even now, and if it fell whilst he was in England, nothing could save him. The power would have passed from his employer's hands, and the promise he had given would not be worth a straw.

'Anybody in Number Thirteen?' asked Garling.

'No, sir,' said the clerk who had brought the message.

'Then show the messenger in there.'

Garling went to meet the Bank messenger. The tale he had to tell was brief. The account of the firm was enormously overdrawn, and cheques to a large amount, bearing the firm's signature, had been passed in—fortunately not

presented for payment. Certain promissory notes also were falling due. 'We pay in fifty thousand pounds this afternoon,' said Garling. 'Mr Lumby is in town, and had made arrangements to meet me at noon to-day for that purpose. We shall follow you at once.'

'We were surprised, sir, at the great drafts you have been making lately.'

'No doubt,' said Garling—'no doubt. Had there been any great stress, Mr Lumby would have transferred a portion of his private account. We shall follow directly.'

The messenger withdrew smilingly. There was no doubt about Lumby and Lumby. The senior partner's private account, swollen year by year for many years past, was enough to show their solidity. Still, if Garling could act so recklessly as this, there was at least room for other business men to gain a little credit for themselves. There was some comfort in thinking that Garling was not quite immaculate. For one moment, when the messenger had gone, Garling stood with a diabolic rebellion in his heart and eyes. Fate forced him to rescue the firm for his own sake, but he had well-nigh courage and hate enough to risk his own ruin and let crash the falling House. No! There were still chances in the world even for him. He walked swiftly to the door of Lumby's room and rained down blows upon its panels with his clenched hand. Mr Barnes came running into the corridor to ask what was the matter, and Garling seeing that he carried a heavy ruler, took it from him and made a very storm of noise. A voice answered from within, and the head of the firm, looking to Mr Barnes's wild astonishment, like a drunken man, threw open the door. Garling entered the room, closed the door in his successor's face, and accosted his late employer.

'Be quick, or you will be too late. A messenger from the Bank has been here to say that the firm's account is overdrawn, with heavy demands to meet.' Crossing the room, he shot back the bolt, and threw open the sliding panel. 'Mr Barnes,' he said, cool and calm as ever, 'oblige me by sending for a hansom. At once, if you please.' The astounded Barnes once more shut out by the returning of the panel, rang the bell and transmitted Garling's order. The merchant facing Garling looked dazed and overwhelmed with sleep. 'I have everything in readiness,' said the ex-cashier. 'Come with me—there is not a minute to lose.'

Lumby looked stupidly at his watch. 'A quarter to four,' he said heavily. 'What is the matter?'

'Come with me,' repeated Garling. 'Compose yourself. If you go to the Bank with such an air as this, the town will declare you bankrupt. You look it.' He spoke with quiet scorn, not hurried by the pressure of events or swayed out of his usual possession of himself.

'I have been asleep,' said the merchant. 'What is the matter?'

'Ruin is the matter!' cried Garling, stirred at last.—Barnes in the next room heard those awful unbelievable words, and dropped into his chair white as a ghost.—'Come with me, and wake up by the way.' If they were late, Garling would not set his liberty at a pin's fee. The merchant, looking weakly round, took up his

hat with a shaking hand and began to draw on his gloves.

'Have you the drafts made out?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Garling, thrusting them upon him with both hands. 'Come!' There was a horrible impatience on him now, and a fear lest they should lose the hour. He had to stifle this hurry and dread, whilst he walked behind Lumby through the offices. The merchant's aspect awakened surmises among the clerks, and it was told afterwards how his hands shook and how pale he was. A hansom was standing already at the door, and they both entered. Garling gave his instructions to the driver; the man touched his horse with his whip, and they started.

'There is ample time,' said the merchant to himself, consulting his watch again. 'I could walk to the Bank in less than the time we have.' His face lost its flushed and excited look, and the old expression came back into his eyes. He drew himself together and crossed his arms upon his breast, holding in his right hand the documents which meant recovered fortune and an unsold name. As his mind began to play again, he fathomed the reason of Garling's urgency. 'A curious situation,' he said almost complacently. 'Was ever scoundrel so anxious to disgorge before?'

SNAKE-ANECDOTES.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

ON one occasion, when I arrived in England, as a porter was removing my things from the ship, a custom-house officer at the dock-gates, impelled by curiosity, insisted on opening one of my boxes. There was not the slightest reason for his doing so; all my boxes had been duly examined at the baggage warehouse, the pass-ticket signed, and this particular one labelled 'Live Animals;' but he had a right to do so, and would do so, and did so, and was bitten in the hand by a snake. I was on board my ship at the time, and was sent for in hot haste. Now, I have suffered so much from meddlesome and vexatious custom-house officials, that I was not at all sorry to hear of the occurrence, and resolved that it should be a lesson to the man and a standard warning to his fellows. They all knew me in this port; they knew that I was no smuggler; but they knew, also, that I brought tropical animals home with me, for the safety of which it was of the highest importance that they should reach their destination as soon as possible. And the consequence was that the truck containing them was frequently stopped in its progress by somebody on the look-out for it, and layed on some pretext or other until black-mail had been extorted.

When I reached the dock-gate, I found the man lying on the ground, half supported by a policeman, and surrounded by an agitated crowd. He was pallid, and covered with a cold perspiration, speechless, faint, and almost pulseless, his hands cold, and his features contracted into an expression of intense anxiety.

'For heaven's sake, give him something quick,' said the policeman, 'or he'll be gone!'

'I can't help it,' I replied; 'he had no right

to open my box; and I refuse to be responsible. He must stand the consequences. I can do nothing for him!'

A cry of horror and indignation burst from the crowd; but I was obstinate. In vain they begged, prayed, entreated me to 'give him something.' If I didn't, the man would die.—I didn't care; serve him right. If I had not retreated to the ship, I believe they would have pitched me into the dock. The unhappy minion of the revenue was put into a cab more dead than alive, and taken to the hospital, where the house-surgeon carefully examined his hand, and laughed at him. He had a terrible fright; *but the snake was a harmless one.*

A sort of converse case to this proves how necessary it is to study these reptiles attentively before venturing on liberties with them. There are two brilliant-coloured snakes, common in South America, which resemble each other so closely that it requires some experience to distinguish them apart; even when compared together, the difference is not readily perceptible to an unpractised eye. Both are loosely known as coral snakes; but one (*Elaps lemniscatus*) is venomous, while the other (*Oxyrhopus dolatus*) is quite innocent. I had shown a specimen of the latter to a friend, who, without having 'gone in' for them scientifically, has not that horror of snakes which most people have, and he had taken it in his hands without fear, on my assuring him that its bite could do him no injury. Some time afterwards he obtained possession of an *Elaps*, which, deceived by the resemblance, he actually handled and exhibited to his acquaintances for several weeks as harmless, until I met him, and demonstrated his error by opening the serpent's mouth and showing him its fangs. Luckily for him, he had not kept the creature sufficiently warm to develop its full activity; otherwise, it would inevitably have bitten him.

I frequently make use of my tame boas and pythons, and less frequently smaller snakes, in the performance of a little amateur conjuring, of which I am rather fond, and for which they are exactly fitted. Not only does the presence of a living serpent create a sort of atmosphere of traditional magic and sorcery in itself—not only does the possibility of such a thing being hidden somewhere deter an audience from wishing to examine any piece of apparatus with too close scrutiny, but they lie concealed in such a small space, that they may be carried about much more conveniently than the rabbits, guinea-pigs, and doves commonly employed for the purpose. My two pythons, each about eight feet long, and a boa a trifle smaller, come out of a borrowed hat which would seem absurdly insufficient to hold one of them, to those unacquainted with their nature and habits; and I can go down among my audience and 'produce' more moccasin, banded, garter, whip, rat, and grass snakes than they would credit me with holding, if I were hollowed out inside for the purpose. I manage it in this way. About an hour before the performance, I put a hot plate, covered with a piece of flannel, into their cage. This they very soon find out, and get on it, though their cage is always kept warm enough; for they love any amount of heat. The surface of the plate being of such a size that it shall be small in proportion to the

snake or snakes, they coil themselves up tightly on it, to get the full benefit of the warmth; and I secure them in this position just before I want them, by quietly turning up the flannel all round and reeving a pointed bit of whalebone through it immediately above the snake's body. Thus I have it in a bag of convenient shape, and the smallest possible capacity—as it would be impossible to force it into one of ten times the size; on withdrawing the whalebone, the contained reptile, having found the restraint irksome, is ready to expand to a most astonishing extent. The large ones I generally introduce all together into a hat from the *servants* or hidden shelf, at the back of a table or chair; while the small ones are concealed, singly or in couples, under the waistcoat, and in the numerous pockets and *profondes* which go to make up a modern conjurer's dress-coat. Sometimes, when I have not sufficient time beforehand to coax them into bags, I fill the 'gold-fish globes' with them, and use the same india-rubber covers to secure them as are employed in that trick, producing them from under a cloth in precisely the same way.

In the summer of 1880 I got a nasty squeeze from a big python in the Jardin Zoologique at Antwerp, which laid me up for several days. I had observed this snake, a female, about fourteen feet long, in one of the dens, and from the white efflorescence about her lips, knew that she was suffering from caries of the jaw with ulceration of the mucous membrane, so fatal to snakes in confinement; and having pointed this out to M. Vekemann, the resident Director, I obtained his permission to make trial of an ointment which I believed I had found efficacious in the early stage of the disease among my own snakes. The four reptile dens in the lion-house at Antwerp are not so commodious as those in the London Gardens, notably in the absence of proper tanks, but are extremely 'pretty'—lots of artificial rockwork framing a large mirror at the back, which has a very natural effect; so that what the poor snakes lack in water they make up for in looking-glass. I came on the following morning, armed with my ointment; but the lady had betaken herself into a crevice of the rocks, where one could scarcely catch sight of her, much less get at her. There were other pythons in the cage, some of them nearly twenty feet long, some not more than five or six; but though they projected their heads and commenced to hiss, they did not attempt to attack; and the keeper—an intelligent man, who spoke French—said they would not come at us if we did not touch them. A little one jumped haumlessly at my leg as I stepped over him. For three days the pythoness remained in her rocky, or rather plastery retreat; but on the fourth, I caught sight of her at the very top of the cage, and at once climbed up and brought her down. The poor thing's mouth was in a worse state than I had anticipated. She came down quietly enough, and though nervous, was not spiteful, and allowed me to handle her.

Now, as ill-luck would have it, the regular keeper was absent on this particular morning, and his place was filled for the time by another from some other part of the Gardens, who spoke nothing but Flemish, of which tongue I am as

profoundly ignorant as he most certainly was of the creatures under his temporary charge. I went into the den with him, taking it for granted, of course, that he was accustomed to snakes, and gave him the box of ointment to hold until I was ready to use it. When I had brought the pythoness fairly down to the floor, I gripped her hard by the neck, which had the effect—as I intended it to have, and as it always has with snakes—of making her open her mouth. I pressed her head away from me at the same time, to prevent her catching hold of any part of my clothing, in her efforts to bite. In her fright and rage, she drew her body up across my back, and twisted her tail round and round my other arm. All that I now required of the keeper was, by teasing or pinching her here and there, or by unwinding the tail when necessary, to cause her to shift her coils constantly, and prevent her resting long enough on one spot to apply undue pressure. My face I could protect for myself with the left hand. This I concluded he understood, as a matter of course. I turned round to make a sign to him to be ready and to give me the ointment, when, judge of my dismay as I caught sight of his stolid face, with a sort of dull impartial interest on it, looking at me through the glass in front, and the door closed on the outside! He had got frightened by the noise of the other pythons, and had quietly gone out again.

I was about to make an impatient gesture, when in that same instant the serpent tightened on me so suddenly and violently that I momentarily lost consciousness. I then found myself staggering about the den, fighting for life. I expected to feel my ribs give way every moment, yet my chief fear at the time was of falling through the glass. I pushed the reptile's head away from me with all my might, lest it should cross my breast, and I can remember catching sight of myself, a mulberry-coloured figure, in the mirror. I knew, too, that I was trampling about over the other pythons, who, furious at the disturbance, were now darting about the den above and all around me in every direction; and I exerted every energy to keep my feet, for I had presence of mind enough left to know that if I went down it would be all over with me. The heat was stifling. I could bear it no longer; the cage spun madly round and round before my eyes, and everything seemed to flame and roar. I let go the head. The snake twisted sharply back over my right shoulder close to my face, but did not bite me, and slid off on to the ground. I just recollect falling against the door with outstretched hands, but nothing more until I found myself sitting on the steps outside, coughing violently, while the phlegmatic keeper was putting a hot key down my back, for some occult reason. I brought up a little blood, and drank a little brandy, after which I soon got better; but I was not well enough to walk home, and the bruise in my side did not fade for many a day. I suppose the whole affair did not last more than a few seconds, but I found it quite long enough. Fortunately, the snake had only a small part of her body across my left side and back; had she encircled me with a whole coil, I should have been crushed like an egg-shell.

Curiously enough, my left arm was quite paralysed, and I did not fully recover the use of it for a week. I did not know it at the time, but she must have pressed her tail under my armpit, and so compressed the nerves. The accident was one of the stupidest and most preventable in the world, and was entirely owing to my taking the wrong man into the cage to assist me. I may add that I went in some days later with the proper keeper, and performed the operation, not only without danger, but without the least difficulty.

That serpents may be discriminatively affectionate towards individuals, beyond the mere instinctive absence of fear, every one who has kept them must know. To those who have not, I should be happy to allow my own pets to prove their case. Can a snake have sufficient intelligence to be jealous? Jealousy is perhaps the nearest approach to a rational attribute, showing some mental process of logical inference or deduction, which animals evince. I don't press the point, but merely give the fact that Totsey, my boa, one of the gentlest and best-tempered of snakes, who lives in a cage at perfect peace with two pythons, an anaconda, a rat-snake, a wasp-snake, and several others, will invariably bite them, if I take them up when she is on my shoulder.

With regard to snake-bites, I have had some which were serious enough: certainly, of which I may perhaps give an account at some future date, when I publish in detail the experiments in pursuit of which they were voluntarily received.

THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. IV.

WHEN M. le Sous-préfet entered the breakfast room early the next morning, he found his daughter and Madeleine awaiting him—the latter trembling with doubt and fear, yet kept from utter despair by the young lady's encouraging words.

'Now, Madame, tell papa everything,' said Pauline. 'Do not be afraid. Papa is kind and good, though he is sometimes severe with wicked people.'

Thus encouraged, Madeleine told everything; and the préfet was convinced that her husband was no Communist, but was the innocent victim of a vile, unprincipled person seeking to gratify his desire for vengeance. Still, he knew not how he could interfere with any good result in behalf of the unfortunate young fisherman. The court-martial was to open at seven o'clock that morning.

'In all probability,' he thought, 'the poor man is already condemned and sentenced. A few minutes would suffice for all.'

He had ordered a police sergeant to bring him a report of the results of the court-martial, the moment it was closed.

It was now past eight o'clock, and Madeleine was just finishing her story when a servant announced the arrival of the sergeant.

The préfet quitted the room, and went to the sergeant, who presented him with the report. In one hour, sixteen prisoners had been found

guilty and sentenced to death! One had been acquitted; but third in the list appeared the name of Antoine Duroc, fisherman, of Honfleur; a rabid Communist, guilty of inciting and leading a mob to attack a military guard, and of rescuing a prisoner under arrest. The condemned were all sentenced to be shot, at noonday, in a *fosse* in the rear of La Roquette, a prison near the Place Voltaire.

Antoine's generous impulse, which had led him to release from arrest a youth whom he believed to be innocent, had brought his doom upon him. He did not attempt to deny the fact; and all he could say in extenuation of his guilt was that he believed the poor lad was innocent. The young fisherman's bold, manly appearance, in marked contrast with the aspect of the miserable, ragged, dirty, and generally ill-looking prisoners who were tried at the same time, interested one or two of the younger officers of the court-martial in his favour. One of these young officers severely cross-questioned the witness Lucien Pierrot.

'Who and what are you?' he asked. 'Can you deny the fact that you are a miserable spy, gaining your livelihood by denouncing and swearing away the lives of your fellow-men?'

'I am in the pay of the government,' replied Lucien. 'I have done my employers good service.'

'Silence!' said the President of the court-martial to the officer. 'The man speaks the truth.—Such wretches, however we may despise them,' he added *sotto voce*, 'are necessary evils in such times as these.'

The favourable notice of the younger officers availed Antoine nothing. As we have already stated, he was condemned and sentenced to death; and the report of the result of the court-martial was already in the hands of the sous-préfet, whose daughter had followed him from the apartment, and now met him re-ascending the stairs.

'Papa, you have heard bad news,' she said, looking into her father's troubled face.

'It has happened as I told you it would, Pauline,' replied the préfet. 'A few hours hence he will be shot!'

'No, papa, no!' exclaimed the young girl, arresting her father's further progress. 'How can you tell that to his poor young wife? Papa, it must not—shall not be! There is yet time. You are acquainted with Monsieur le Général Beaumont, the President of the court-martial. Hasten to him, papa. Take the poor woman with you. Show Monsieur le Général the mayor's letter; let the young wife tell her own story. Meanwhile, dear papa, I will pray earnestly for your success. But go at once; lose not a moment of time.'

'I will go, Pauline,' replied the préfet, after a few moments' thought. 'I will do my best; but I have faint hope of success. Monsieur le Général is, as you say, a friend of mine, and a just man. But he is stern and uncompromising in the performance of what he believes to be his duty; and he is justly and terribly severe in his dealings with the Communists.'

'But the poor man is not a Communist, papa!'

interposed Pauline. 'Perhaps not; but the General believes him to be one of those guilty, blood-stained wretches.'

If the General were to learn the nature of my errand, I do not believe he would see me. Nevertheless, I will go, and will do my utmost to save the poor man.'

The préfet and his daughter re-entered the room in which Madeleine, in a dreadful state of suspense, was awaiting their return. She had feared that some ill news had arrived, and a glance at the faces of the préfet and his daughter convinced her that her fears were not groundless.

'Monsieur, you have heard bad news,' she faintly gasped. 'My husband—my beloved Antoine is'—She could not give utterance to the dread word that was on her lips.

It was necessary to acquaint her with what had occurred.

'Is convicted, and sentenced to death; but he may yet be saved,' said the préfet. 'Be calm, Madame. Do not give way to despair. Bear up bravely. Much now depends upon yourself. Have you strength and courage to accompany me immediately to Monsieur le Général Beaumont, the President of the court-martial that sat this morning?'

'Monsieur, I have strength and courage to go anywhere—to do anything to save my poor innocent husband.'

'Then come with me—come at once, just as you are. You shall plead your husband's cause with the General. Do not hope too much; but do not despair of obtaining your husband's pardon.'

The sympathies of the préfet were now fully aroused. He ordered the horses to be put to his carriage, and bade Madeleine follow him into the courtyard. As she was leaving the room, she threw her arms round Pauline's neck and embraced her. 'Mademoiselle, thou art an angel of goodness!' she murmured. 'If I succeed—and my heart tells me that the good God will grant me success—it will be to thee, under heaven, that my Antoine will owe his life. Thou wilt restore an innocent man to his wife and babe, and wilt save his judges from imbruing their hands in innocent blood.' Then she hastened after the préfet, and entered the carriage—which was already waiting in the courtyard—with him.

At the moment of the préfet's arrival with Madeleine, the General was seated at a table in his bureau which was strewn with documents. A commissioner entered the room. 'For Monsieur le Général!' he said, presenting a long folded paper.

The General glanced at the document. 'It is well. You may go. There is no answer needed,' he said to the commissioner. Then addressing his secretary, who was writing at a table near by, he said: 'The government is determined to keep us busy, Lagrange. Seventeen fresh arrests of Communists this morning,' reading from the document.

The commissioner reappeared.

'Well, sir, what now?' said the General.

'Monsieur le Sous-préfet wishes to see your Excellency.'

'Monsieur le Sous-préfet! Show him up instantly. Was there need to announce his visit?'

'Some fresh intelligence, I presume,' he went

on, addressing the secretary, as the sous-préfet, closely followed by the shrinking, trembling Madeleine, entered the office.

'I hope, Monsieur le Général, I do not intrude, in visiting you at so early an hour?' said the préfet.

'Intrude! My good friend, you are welcome at all hours!' replied the General. 'Pray, be seated. I was just saying to Lagrange, when you were announced, that the government is determined to keep us busy. Seventeen fresh arrests this morning in my department; and sixteen scoundrels, whom we tried this morning, will be sent on their long last journey to-day at noon. We make quick work of it! The emissaries of the government—call them spies, traitors, what you will—are active. They are a pack of mean, contemptible rascals, no doubt. But at such times as the present, they are a necessary evil. One Lucien Pierrot—the best bloodhound of the pack, and as base a villain, I believe, as ever drew breath—has alone denounced sixty Communists! 'Twould not be amiss, when the work is done, to send the fellow to Hades, to keep company with the wretches he has hunted to death. But he is an active, useful scoundrel withal—Ha, ha! Whom have we here!'—catching sight of Madeleine, who had crouched down behind the sous-préfet.—'A fair follower of yours, eh?—But do not tremble, little one. We are never harsh with the fair sex.'

Madeleine shuddered, and her heart sank in her bosom. It seemed to her as if she heard her husband's doom pronounced in the harsh voice of the General, who could jest while he spoke of shedding the blood even of misguided and evil-minded men.

'Monsieur le Général,' said the sous-préfet, 'this poor woman is the unhappy young wife of the Honfleur fisherman Antoine Duroc, who was among the prisoners tried by court-martial this morning and sentenced to be shot. Monsieur, there is every reason to believe that the poor man is innocent, and that he is the victim of the wretched spy, Lucien Pierrot, of whom you spoke just now.'

Instantly the bearing of the General underwent a change. 'Antoine Duroc!' he exclaimed, interrupting the préfet, in a stern tone of voice. 'Ha! I recollect the man; a fine-looking, intelligent, determined young fellow—one of those men who gain influence over the ignorant, poverty-stricken wretches who comprise the great majority of the Communists, and urge them to pillage and murder, and finally to their own destruction. I am amazed, Monsieur, to hear you, of all men, raise a voice in behalf of a condemned Communist—you, whose official position must have taught you that the greatest criminals are, as a rule, loudest in their protestations of innocence. This man Duroc, however, confessed his guilt, and even appeared to feel proud of the part he had taken in freeing a suspected man from arrest. It is such men as Duroc that are most to be feared, and who are most deserving of punishment.'

'Monsieur le Général,' replied the préfet, 'Duroc's confession—of which I have heard—goes far in my opinion, to prove his innocence of the other charges preferred against him. The poor

fellow believed the prisoner under arrest—a mere lad—to be innocent; and actuated by the generous impulse of the moment, he set the prisoner free. The assertion that Duroc is a Communist is certainly untrue. The young man, who was never in Paris until a day or two ago, does not know the meaning of the term, and has never troubled his head with any political questions. This fact I can prove by means of a letter from Monsieur le Maire of Houfleur, who has known the honest young fisherman from his boyhood. If you, Monsieur, will read the letter I have received, and will hearken to the story of Duroc's heart-broken young wife'—

'I will read nothing—hearken to nothing, Monsieur,' interrupted the General, who had listened with angry impatience to the speech of the préfet. 'The man has been proved guilty; he is a dangerous fellow. I cannot reconsider his case. Besides, even if he has been wrongly sentenced, which I do not believe, there is no time to make further inquiry into the matter. It is now ten o'clock. At noon, two hours hence, the sentence of the court-martial will be carried out'—

A wild cry of anguish from Madeleine, who gave way to despair on hearing her husband's doom thus carelessly alluded to, interrupted the remarks of the General. She would have sunk down to the floor had not the préfet supported her in his arms. But instantly recovering from the faintness that was stealing over her, she threw herself on her knees before the stern arbiter of her husband's fate, and tearfully entreated him to listen to her story.

'Rise, rise, young woman,' said the General, though with less sternness in his voice. 'It is useless to kneel to me. I cannot hearken to such appeals. Were I to hearken to one, I must hearken to others. Besides, as I have told you, it is too late to interfere with a sentence which I believe to have been justly pronounced.' He attempted to assist the weeping young woman to her feet; but headless of this attempt, Madeleine still kneeling, proceeded to tell the story of the cruel threats and persecutions of Lucien Pierrot; and the General, in spite of himself, was compelled to listen to the tale. She told how it happened that her husband had come to Paris only a few days after his return from a long voyage; that, having heard of the troubles in Paris, she had dreaded some evil would befall him, and had urged him to return as soon as possible; ending by declaring, in words which her earnest and passionate love made eloquent, that the simple-hearted fisherman was incapable of intentional wrong-doing.

The stern General, who listened impatiently at first, gradually became interested in the weeping wife's story, until at length he began to think that the young fisherman might after all possibly be innocent. He read the mayor's letter, which he had hitherto declined to notice, and became more evidently convinced that Madeleine had told the truth, and that her husband was the victim of Lucien Pierrot's designs.

'Rise, young woman,' he said in a gentle voice, as he assisted the weeping girl to her feet.

'There was a stir outside the office, and the next moment a commissioner, breathless with haste,

entered the room. 'Pardon, Monsieur le Général,' gasped the commissioner, as he handed to the General an official-looking document. 'I bring a letter of the utmost importance from Monsieur le Docteur Veron, Médecin en Chef at the Hôpital Beaujon.'

The General opened the letter, glanced over it, and then read aloud as follows:

MONSIEUR LE GÉNÉRAL BEAUMONT—I have to acquaint your Excellency that Lucien Pierrot, the denouncer and the chief witness against the fisherman Antoine Duroc, who was tried by court-martial this morning, was assassinated by some person, whose friend he had hunted to his doom, almost immediately after he quitted the court. He lived only a few minutes; but during that interval he confessed that, actuated by a craving for revenge, he had sworn falsely against the man Duroc, whom he now declared to be innocent of all the charges preferred against him, save that of rescuing a prisoner whom he believed to be innocent. The spy—pity that the government is compelled to employ such wretches—died in great agony, entreating with his last breath that his confession should be instantly conveyed to Monsieur the President of the court-martial.

(Signed), HENRI VERON, Hôpital Beaujon.

'Thank heaven! My husband's innocence is proved!' exclaimed Madeleine, upraising her clasped hands.

'Save that he rescued from arrest a suspected criminal, Madame,' said the General. 'But I believe that your husband acted in that instance under an impulse of the moment. Yet, I know not how to act. His pardon must be granted by government, and there is no time to make the necessary application. At all events, I will take it upon myself to stay your husband's execution, and will take the necessary measures to have the pardon ratified afterwards. But I fear it is even now too late. The prison of La Roquette is far distant; it is long past ten o'clock, and at noon the sentence of the court-martial will be carried out.'

VAGRANCY AND MENDICANCY.

By the courtesy of the editor of *The Field* we are enabled to reproduce the able remarks on the above subject which appeared in his paper on the 10th of June. The article is as follows:

The Howard Association has published a useful Report [published at sixpence, by Mr S. Harris, bookseller, Bishopsgate Without, London] on the subject of vagrancy and mendicancy, evils which for years past have engaged a great deal of attention. It will perhaps be remembered that the Howard Association was founded for the express purpose of promoting the best methods of treating criminals and preventing crime, and the object of the present Report is the education of the public mind in reference to the causes and prevention of the constantly increasing evils of vagrancy and its attendant consequences. The tolerance, we might almost say the favour, of the

public is the original source of almost the whole of the evils which are now complained of. Some firmness is needed in rejecting the importunities of those who would persuade us they are starving. Beggars may be relieved, or, as some would say, considered, without due regard for the consequences. In some of the pastoral parishes of Northumberland, vagrancy, according to Sir Charles E. Trevelyan, has become such an intolerable nuisance, that when the labourers are away on distant farms, the women often lock themselves up, or keep loaded guns at hand, as a protection against tramps. In other parts of the country the population is less scattered and better able to protect itself; but in all parts where tramps and mendicants are 'considered,' in the sense of being tolerated and even encouraged, all other interests must suffer more or less.

The treatment of this particular class of criminals, who are invariably guilty of soliciting alms, and are generally thieves and pilferers besides, varies in different parishes, according to the particular views of the local authorities. In some districts the vagrants are received in the casual wards with a hospitality which they highly appreciate. As Earl Stanhope observed in a communication to the Howard Association, the slack-managed workhouses are crowded with casuals, but, on the contrary, very few beggars visit the strictly managed houses. At Sydenham, in the immediate neighbourhood of London, mendicants have successively flourished and multiplied, or suffered almost complete extinction, according to the treatment. Some years ago the magistracy, the police, and a committee of local residents combined for the purpose of a stringent course of treatment, and the evil was checked. Unfortunately, it has since been again fostered by a course of treatment which, wherever it may be practised, is always successful in multiplying the number of tramps and mendicants.

To a partial extent their increase in some districts has been due to agricultural depression. That they have increased in certain localities there can be no doubt. The Report of the Kent Mendicity Society shows that the number of cases of relief granted to casuals at the workhouses in that county during the past six years has gradually increased from forty-six thousand seven hundred and thirty-two to one hundred and forty-four thousand eight hundred and sixty-one per annum. But as a rule, mendicity and vagrancy are 'professions' not very much influenced by the state of the labour-market, and they are, under all ordinary circumstances, capable of suppression, or at any rate of being kept under reasonable limits. Lenient as the law may be, its stricter administration would suffice for the discouragement of paupers to an extent which only the initiated seem at present to recognise. So far as the magistrates are concerned, little, if any, additional legislation is perhaps required, though it is certainly desirable that all magistrates should enforce the law, instead of allowing it to become

a dead letter, and that boards of guardians and magistrates should act in unison.

Mr Albert Pell's Bill proposes to increase the efficiency of boards of guardians, by giving them power to detain vagrants for several days' labour in the union workhouses. They ought at any rate to be detained long enough for legal investigation, and punishment when necessary. But the genuine labourer in search of work should have the means afforded him of proving his identity by presentation of a way-ticket or other pledge of character, so that he may proceed on his way without detention. If every industrious casual had the opportunity afforded him of proving his true character, and if relief were in all cases assured, each case being then immediately investigated by the parish officer, and, if necessary, by the magistrate with a view to punishment when deserved, one of the most pressing causes of indiscriminate alms-giving by the public—the apprehension of a possibility of the destitute being starved—would be happily removed. For that reason it may be desirable that any vagrant should be at once received and at once relieved.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that the number of casuals is invariably regulated by their treatment. The law provides for each a claim to a comfortable lodging, a good bed, a bath, night-clothes, and a meal night and morning; and these comforts might be expected to encourage vagrancy. But some of them are not appreciated. In a union in a southern county, where casuals had become a considerable burden, the master of the workhouse reported that he had very much diminished the number by a rigid enforcement of 'the bath.' Parliament prescribed 'the tub' with kind intentions, probably; but in practice it is found that casuals regard this test with invariable hostility, especially in the winter. Another hint for the officials is that the morning 'task of work' prescribed by law should be made a real task. We would point out, too, that in our experience, another most effective 'test' has been applied in the form of solitude. In some districts separate cells have been provided for the vagrants, and the 'house' thus fitted up has been speedily forsaken, in favour of establishments where unrestrained companionship is permitted.

For the purpose of suppressing professional vagrancy, it is absolutely necessary that the duties of the executive should be sternly performed. But neither the law nor the executive can alone deal with the evils of mendicancy, unless they are supported by that portion of the public which is at present addicted to indiscriminate charity. Notwithstanding all the ingenious plans and suggestions of experienced officials or others who have studied the subject of vagrancy and mendicancy, it is reluctantly admitted, even by those who are most sanguine as to the effects of remedial measures, that comparatively little can be accomplished in the way of suppression until the givers of alms are better 'educated.' They have yet to recognise that they produce the evils which their misplaced charity is intended to mitigate. If their eyes were but opened thoroughly to the deceit and wickedness they foster, they would assuredly desist. The truth is that nearly all mendicity is imposition, and the so-called charity of the streets is a direct encouragement to lies and deception.

We are more overrun with vagrants in England, it is said, than any other country except Spain and Italy, and the cause must be looked for in our wealth rather than our poverty, and in that perennial fountain of benevolence which exists among the people. On this part of the subject, the Howard Report informs us that women are responsible for half the ill-directed charity complained of. One of the correspondents of the Association, an experienced member of a board of guardians, gives examples of the deceptions by which women, he says, are imposed upon by a clever and expert tramp. 'He counterfeits a cough,' says this authority; 'he has a blister upon his chest; he knows how to perform a "fit";' he has a thousand-and-one crafty shifts by which to impose upon the unwary; besides his budget of piteous tales, which would do credit to the invention of a practised novelist.' It would appear, then, that the chief difficulty attending the work of suppression is that mendicancy is fostered and supported by 'the million.' 'The money given at cottage doors,' we read in the Report, 'to habitual mendicants in a single year probably exceeds twentyfold what the working-classes contribute to real charitable and beneficent objects.' It is the poor who are most plundered; and it is a curious fact, which shows what a secure position the class in question holds in the present state of public feeling, that tender-hearted, simple-minded women whose own children are not too well fed, are least able to resist the hypocritical appeals of tramps and impostors. Magistrates and boards of guardians may put the vagrants in the stocks, cut off their tobacco, confine them in cells, and inflict a religious service upon them night and morning, which they very much detest; but they cannot institute stocks or solitary sleeping-cells for 'the million.' And, therefore, the mind of the million being uninstructed, all efforts to diminish the evils complained of must for the present prove sadly ineffective.

The Howard Association, in common with all who have closely studied the subject of vagrancy and mendicancy, anticipate the ultimate discouragement of these evils, if they cannot be altogether suppressed, in the spread of enlightenment among the public. Meanwhile, the management on the part of the executive should undoubtedly be more strict in many of the unions, so that the minimum amount of evil may be endured, even if, for the present, it cannot be completely cured. Several attempts have been made to regulate charity and render it more reasonable, especially by satisfying the public in regard to the danger of starvation. Captain Amyatt, chief constable of Dorset, is the author of a plan by which bread tickets are distributed among vagrants, and these each being exchangeable at certain shops in the district for a pound of bread, private relief is said to be discouraged. There is a 'Berkshire system' as well as a 'Dorset plan,' which also aims at feeding genuine travellers seeking for work, and relies on the police to prosecute professional vagrants. It is doubtful if either plan has been entirely successful. And even if the stringent resolutions adopted this year at the quarter-sessions, Newcastle, were carried into effect throughout the country, it may be feared that the stream of misdirected charity would continue

to flow. It is for that reason that the facts presented in the Report of the Howard Association might be very advantageously circulated by the Press.

REMINISCENCES OF A VISIT TO SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

VERY shortly after the return of Sir John Franklin from the Lieutenant-governorship of Van Diemen's Land, or Tasmania as it is now more generally called, he sailed on his last ill-fated voyage to the Arctic seas. Only a few months previous to his retirement from his high official position, I visited Hobart-Town, on board the *Pestonjee*, an old East India Company's cruiser, which had been chartered by the government of India to convey military and naval convicts to Van Diemen's Land. It was the custom in such cases to appoint a naval surgeon to accompany the transport-ship, who had the sole command over the convicts; and also another naval officer—generally a passed-midshipman—as an assistant to the surgeon, in his governing rather than in his medical capacity. I was appointed to accompany Dr Clarke; and for the sake of the change, I accepted the appointment joyously, for it gave me liberty to do pretty much as I pleased, and released me for six months from the restraints of naval discipline.

The military convicts on board were in many respects to be pitied. They were all Englishmen; and most of them had been transported for offences which, had they been civilians, would have been punished simply by a sentence of a month or two of imprisonment. With the naval convicts it was different; they were chiefly what are termed in India 'Portuguese,' that is to say, they were descendants of the original Portuguese settlers at Goa and other parts of the Bombay coast. These Portuguese convicts, though mostly mere youths, were convicted of such crimes as mutiny, piracy, stabbing, theft, and even murder. It was necessary to keep a strict guard over them; and it needed not that one should be a disciple of Lavater, to read their characters in the gloomy, malignant expression of their otherwise handsome features. Besides these, there were several female passengers, one or two of them wives of military convicts, who, as a great favour, had been permitted, with their children, to accompany their husbands; and others who, in consequence of the good conduct of their husbands, previously transported, had been permitted to rejoin them.

All went well until two or three days previous to our arrival at Hobart-Town. The day before, there had been a heavy gale of wind; but it had subsided, though there was still a high sea running, and the ship rolled uneasily. The female passengers, with their children, however, having been necessarily confined between decks during the gale, were glad to come on deck again to breathe the fresh air; and despite the rolling of the ship, they had nearly all come up, and were clinging to the bulwarks, anxiously looking

out for the mountains of Tasmania, which it was expected would soon become visible. Among the children was a remarkably beautiful little boy of three years old, the son of a soldier in Tasmania. This little fellow was a great favourite and pet of all on board, and was fond of running about the decks and playing with the sailors. Presently the startling cry was raised: 'A child overboard!' It was the little fellow I have just alluded to, who had escaped from his mother's arms and slipped overboard. The mother fainted; the women screamed; the sailors came rushing up from below; while, in obedience to the command of the officer, the watch on deck proceeded to heave the ship to the wind.

The captain, who had been on deck throughout the continuance of the gale, had gone to his cabin, worn out with fatigue. He was awakened, however, from his sound slumber by the unusual noise, and naturally anticipating that some serious accident had occurred, he rushed on deck in his shirt sleeves, as he had lain down. 'What is the matter?' he inquired, in great alarm.

The accident was explained to him; and the distant form of the child, now appearing like a mere speck, seen from time to time on the crest of a wave, was pointed out.

'Be smart with the boat, my men!' he cried; and casting off his shoes, he sprang, without another word, over the taffrail into the water, a depth of twelve or fourteen feet, and struck out boldly in the direction in which he had seen the child. He was an admirable swimmer, and had saved the lives of sailors on three different occasions under similar circumstances. His progress was watched with breathless interest. He was frequently lost to sight in the trough of the sea; and sometimes it was thought that the child had sunk, and then it was seen again, a mere black speck on the water. Sometimes the captain himself was so long out of sight, that fears were expressed for his safety; but he reappeared, still swimming boldly on. At length he was seen to reach the child; but he was so far away, that many doubted whether he had saved it. He could be seen now remaining stationary; but none could be certain, even with the aid of a spyglass, whether he had the child with him. The general belief was that he had seen the infant sink, and feeling his strength exhausted, and perceiving the uselessness of swimming farther, was waiting for the boat to come up to him.

Meanwhile, the men in the boat were pulling with all their might, though their progress was difficult in such a heavy sea, and to us on board, it seemed painfully slow. We feared that the captain's strength would be utterly exhausted, and that he would sink ere it reached him. At length, he was seen to be dragged on board; but even now, it was impossible to discover if the child also was saved.

All was now silent enough on board. The women had ceased their cries, and their lips only moved with murmured prayers, as they watched with almost breathless anxiety the return of the boat. At length it came alongside. The captain was lying across the stern-sheets; but the child was safe, and strange to say, alive. It was soon lifted on board, and the next moment

was clasped in its mother's arms. The mother and several of the women wept for joy.

The captain had been taken on board completely exhausted. He had seized the child's clothes with his teeth, and thus kept its head out of the water; but, as he said, he felt that he was unable to swim a single stroke to meet the boat, and was compelled to await its arrival. I need not speak of the reception he met with. It is enough to say that the mother threw herself at his feet, and clasping his knees, while tears ran down her cheeks, called upon heaven to bless and reward him. The other females were scarcely less affected and grateful. The captain was assisted to his cabin and went to bed; while the child, when its wet garments were replaced by dry ones, speedily recovered its composure.

Two days afterwards we entered the harbour of Hobart-Town, and had hardly let go our anchors ere a boat was seen approaching from the shore, in which were the Lieutenant-governor and Lady Franklin, attended by their body-guard, in the light-blue colonial uniform. The customary salute was fired, and Sir John and Lady Franklin came on board. Sir John inquired respecting the convicts; while Lady Franklin—as we subsequently learned was her constant custom when female convict or emigrant ships entered the harbour—collected the women and children around her, questioned them as to their expectations and future prospects, and in the present instance promised to have the wives conveyed to their husbands with all possible despatch. She also inquired as to their conduct on board, and their means of living when they went on shore; presented those who could read with tracts, and promised to assist them to the utmost of her ability so long as they behaved themselves well—a promise which she afterwards carried into effect.

After Sir John had examined the convicts, he asked to be introduced to the government officers, and then descended with his lady to the cabin to partake of refreshments.

I was greatly struck with the contrast between Sir John Franklin and his wife. Sir John had already acquired fame as an Arctic explorer, and on this account, I, a youth of eighteen, regarded him with much greater interest than I should have done had he been merely the Lieutenant-governor of Tasmania. He was a tall, portly, florid-complexioned man, with a head slightly bald, of very commanding presence, and with a cheerful, benevolent expression of countenance.

Lady Franklin looked like a fairy by his side. She was a slight, delicate-looking woman, with gentle, interesting features, and a soft low voice. Rather below the ordinary female stature, she seemed still less standing by the side of her stalwart husband. They remained about an hour, and then left the ship, a salute being fired on their departure. I had, however, an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with them than I could possibly have become during their brief visit to the ship; for before he left the vessel, Sir John invited the naval surgeon, the captain, and myself to dine at his residence, 'the Penns,' the next day.

Sir John Franklin had heard from the surgeon all relating to Captain Pirie's gallant conduct in

saving the life of the child at the imminent risk of his own; and the woman, with many praises and blessings, had acquainted Lady Franklin with the particulars, the glad mother proudly showing the beautiful boy whom she had so nearly lost. The captain was considerably raised in the Lieutenant-governor's estimation in consequence; and as the women, when they got on shore, quickly spread the story, he became the lion of the day. The newspapers published an account of the affair; and he was an object of curiosity and admiration so long as he remained in port. It is not always that temporary celebrity is so well merited.

To return, however, to Sir John and Lady Franklin. The Penns was a pretty, park-like place, a few miles out of the town, to which the governor was fond of retiring from the bustle and ceremony of Government House. It was not very large; but the house was snug and comfortable, and the gardens and grounds well planted, and kept in excellent order.

At the appointed time, we made our appearance at the Penns as the governor's guests. A few of the members of the government, and one or two merchants from the town, were also present, and the dinner passed off as such dinners of ceremony generally do. Some of the guests, members of the government, were at daggers-drawn with each other, and in disfavour with the merchants and citizens; but Sir John and Lady Franklin did their best to set everybody at ease and make things agreeable. There was therefore no apparent dissatisfaction; though a certain restraint and coolness between some of the guests was plainly discernible.

Captain Pirie was obliged to return to his ship that night; but Dr Clarke and I were pressed to remain; and we did so, the captain receiving and accepting a second invitation, before he took his departure.

I well remember, when his colonial guests were gone, Sir John Franklin complaining of his position. 'I am out of my element here, and I know that I am not popular with the free population,' he observed to the surgeon; 'though ever since I first landed, I have exerted myself to the utmost for the benefit of the colony, and have striven to settle the differences between the people. I care not how soon I return to England; and Lady Franklin fully agrees with me in this respect. The fact is,' he went on, 'they want a stricter, sterner hand over them. Such a man as my predecessor, [Sir Arthur Head, if I mistake not.] They quarrelled with him too, as they do, and will, with everybody. It is one of the evils of a system in which there are two distinct and indeed antagonistic classes to deal with and to rule over—the free settlers, and the descendants of former convicts, many of whom are among the wealthiest and most influential of the people. Socially, the two classes will not unite or mingle together, though they are necessitated to do so in public. This is not to be wondered at. But it places the governor in a very unpleasant position, and will continue to do so until convicts are no longer brought here from the mother-country, and time shall have obliterated all distinctions. As I was saying, they quarrelled continuously with the late governor, but he cared nothing for their com-

plaints, and would have his own way in everything; and they really liked him the better for it. Lady Franklin,' he added with a smile, 'would have me resign the Lieutenant-governorship, and return to England to settle down for life. But that would hardly content me. I long again to be on the quarter-deck—again to push forward the explorations in the Arctic seas, which I believe it to be England's duty to carry out, unless she is prepared to see the laurels of success plucked from her, and worn by some other country.'

If these were not the exact words of Sir John Franklin, they are nearly so, and they express the tone of his conversation. He complained bitterly of the apathy that existed with regard to Arctic exploration, and more than once repeated his fears that if England did not move more energetically in the matter, the grand triumph would be achieved by America, France, or Russia. Still, he seemed to feel an assurance that he would yet have an opportunity to continue the prosecution of the object he had most at heart, through private enterprise. That both he and Lady Franklin were heartily sick of Tasmania, was apparent in all their conversation.

The naval surgeon was obliged to return to the ship the next day to send away his reports and settle other matters in connection with his duties. I, however, had literally nothing to do. My duties throughout the voyage from India had been little more than a sinecure; and Sir John Franklin, who was always remarkable for his great kindness to the young officers of his profession, invited me to remain until the ship was ready to return to India; and I on my part was nothing loath to exchange the confinement of a transport-ship for the comforts of a pleasant dwelling on shore, and the opportunity of roaming at pleasure over the country.

Sir John seemed never to be happier than when speaking of his former voyages; and he encouraged me to converse freely with him as we strolled over the grounds together or rode out into the country. He had a complete and most perfect and elaborate set of charts of the Arctic regions, so far as they had then been explored, upon which his own explorations, and those of Captains Parry and Ross, and other Arctic explorers were distinctly marked out; and it was his greatest pleasure of an evening to display these charts and point out the spots he had visited; also tracing the courses he would endeavour to pursue, if it should ever be his 'good fortune,' as he expressed himself, again to be employed in what was the great hobby of his life. There was not a point he had discovered, nor a spot that he had visited, respecting which he had not some anecdote to tell or some narrow escape to relate. And to me it was delightful to listen to these anecdotes from the lips of a man who had bravely dared and overcome the perils of which he spoke, and who had already rendered his name famous as one of the boldest and most energetic and persevering of Arctic discoverers. Besides, I confess that it was flattering to my pride to hear a post-captain and a Lieutenant-governor conversing thus freely with a young midshipman, and encouraging me to express my own opinions, and listening to them kindly and

attentively. I spent a pleasant visit at the Penns, and was sorry to return to the ship.

While we lay in port, an emigrant-ship and a female convict-ship arrived—the latter, one of the last, if not the last female convict-ship that left the shores of England; and Sir John and Lady Franklin visited them both immediately on their arrival. It was her ladyship's chief pleasure, and she seemed to regard it as a duty, to exert herself to the utmost for the benefit of the younger female emigrants, and also for such female convicts as had conducted themselves well during the voyage, and whose offences against the laws of their country were such as afforded hope that, removed from the temptations of vice and poverty, they might yet redeem their characters and prove useful members of society. It must be recollected that in those days, when there was a scarcity of females in the Australian colonies, young women were often transported for offences which would nowadays be punished by a few months', or even a few weeks' imprisonment.

On landing, the female convicts were taken to a government penitentiary, where suitable employment was found for them. Persons, however, in need of female servants were permitted immediately to engage such as they thought might suit them; and many young women were at once employed as housemaids, nurses, and dressmakers, those who engaged them being answerable for their good conduct, and bound at certain periods to send in a report of their behaviour to the government. Such servants of course received no wages beyond such douceurs as their employers thought proper to give them as a reward for good behaviour. Moreover, after a certain period—four months, I believe—female convicts whose conduct had been satisfactory were permitted to marry any respectable and well-conducted free emigrant who was willing to take them, and had first obtained permission from the governor. The husband, moreover, was held answerable for them, and compelled to report them at stated periods to the officials of the government. Such marriages were very frequent; and it was said that many good-looking young girls were picked out immediately upon their arrival by men who were in search of wives, and who kept an eye upon them until the period of their probation had elapsed and they were at liberty to marry. It was even asserted that such females often made the best of wives. What, however, appeared strange to me was that neither the employers nor the husbands of convict females were permitted to know the crime of which they had been guilty, unless the convict, whether servant or wife, confessed it to them of her own accord. A similar secrecy was maintained as to the crimes of male convicts, unless they had been unusually atrocious, when somehow or other they leaked out, the convict probably being an object of extraordinary curiosity. Years, however, have elapsed since convicts have been sent abroad, Tasmania being freed from the evil before some of the other Australian colonies.

The Lieutenant-governor came on board the vessel once more before we sailed, to bid us farewell, and to inform the captain that he had sent a statement of his generous and gallant conduct

in saving the child's life to the Royal Humane Society in England, asking that he should be rewarded with their gold medal; which testimonial he subsequently received. This was the last I saw of the kind and brave Sir John Franklin.

PATENT MEDICINES.

A curious but interesting light was thrown upon the subject of Patent Medicines in a recent discussion in the House of Commons, demanding, we think, more than the mere newspaper paragraph given to it. The early history of patent medicines shortly stated appears to be somewhat as follows: Letters-patent—that is, open letters—were granted to certain persons with the monopoly of vending given articles. Abuses, however, having arisen, Parliament intervened, restricting the monopolies to a given number of years, and demanding at the same time a definition or specification of the character of the articles. Whether the specification of these articles ultimately came to be too vague and indefinite, or the inventors themselves dispensed with the patents; or whether, during the French wars, government, from fiscal necessities, changed the system of patents, does not clearly appear; but the system of letters-patent was changed, and stamp duties imposed instead. The various articles specified by name in the schedule to the Act 52 George III., includes 'Foreign medicines of all kinds except drugs, and also all other pills, powders, lozenges, tinctures, potions, cordials, electuaries, plasters, unguents, salves, ointments, drops, lotions, oils, spirits, medicated herbs and waters, chemical and officinal preparations whatsoever, to be used or applied externally or internally as medicines or medicaments . . . made, prepared, uttered, vended, or exposed to sale by any person or persons whatsoever, wherein the person making, preparing, uttering, vending, or exposing to sale the same hath, or claims to have, any occult art or secret for making or preparing the same.' This, in other words, simply means that if any person puts up a preparation for the cure of any complaint whatever, and puts upon the label attached to the preparation the words 'Prepared only by,' the preparation becomes liable to stamp duty. The scale of stamp duty generally determines the price of such nostrums; for example, one shilling and three-halfpence, the price of the article being one shilling, and the stamp three-halfpence; or two shillings and ninepence, the stamp in this case being threepence, and the price of the medicine two shillings and sixpence.

Two evils arising out of this system of stamp duties, are at present being used as arguments for their repeal. The first of these—namely, the sanction or countenance which government is apparently made to give to such nostrums—is not a new one. Clever but unscrupulous quacks have taken advantage of the importance of the government stamp to puff their preparations under its wing in many ways and from the earliest times. It is questionable, however, if there is much in this argument.

The changes have been too frequently rung by advertisers on the importance of the stamp, as a proof of the value of their nostrums, and patent medicines are too common in the present day, for any to be deceived but the most hopelessly ignorant. The other evil is much more serious, and to place it plainly before our readers is the purport of the present article. At the time the Pharmacy Act (1868) was being framed, the makers and dealers in such medicines were, for certain reasons, exempted from the provisions of the Act.

Probably the result of this concession was not fully realised at the time; but it now requires no prescience to see how serious its consequences are. By this Pharmacy Act, very stringent restrictions are placed on the sale of poisons. No one, unless he be a medical man, can obtain any of the more potent poisons without very considerable difficulty, such as giving name and address, stating purposes for which they are required, signing his name before witnesses, &c. The less virulent poisons are also put under restrictions, such as labelling distinctly the name of the substance, with the name of the seller, and also with the word 'Poison;' the seller in both cases requiring to be on the register of chemists and druggists. All patent-medicine vendors, however, by reason of the concession above alluded to, are exempt from these restrictions. It is open to any one, even to the most ignorant, to put up and sell these powerful medicines (poisons they may be) in any quantity and of any strength, without control by government, or guarantee of any kind as to the ingredients, if they only observe the stamp duties.

It will, we think, strike most minds that the proverbial coach-and-six may be driven under such circumstances with some facility through this Act of parliament. This is the second evil, as generally stated, and we are not aware that the argument against patent medicines has ever advanced much beyond this. To those, however, who are intimately acquainted with the subject, the evil is much more serious than appears on the surface. A few accidental deaths from inadvertence or carelessness, or from want of having the nostrum properly labelled poison, is the least of the evil. If for the word 'poison,' used in the foregoing statements, 'narcotics' be substituted, and if with the use of narcotics we can associate habits formed which lead in many cases to confirmed disease, and worse still, exercise the most hurtful influence on the mental and moral constitution, we even then realise only part of the evil. To us, the worst part of all seems to lie in this, that the poor deluded takers of these nostrums may have formed the habit of using narcotics before they are aware. Under the synonym of some simple household remedy, they unconsciously have been taking solutions of the most powerful narcotics. Dr Farquharson, speaking on the subject in the discussion referred to in the House of Commons, mentions that 'one of the most dangerous compounds (of this class) was an Essence of Linseed, containing a large quantity of morphia, from the use of which painful cases of poisoning had occurred.' Each case of poisoning resulting from the use of this nostrum, however much to be deplored, is probably as nothing compared with the many cases of vicious habits

which its use may have formed. The habit of taking narcotics, as every one knows, is not difficult to acquire; and with many, the only hope of safety, as in the case of others with strong drinks, is never to taste them.

The warning thus given as to a certain class of patent medicines does not come too soon. They have been increasing to a very great extent in recent years, in fact supplanting very much the old well-known family medicines; and owing to the success of one or two comparatively innocent and even efficacious preparations, others of a baleful tendency have unfortunately become popular.

CUCKOO!

Summer is leamen in,
Lhude sing Cuckoo.

Old English Song.

There's a dreamy voice in the summer air,
Its mellow music is ever rare—

Cuckoo!

Leading our thoughts like gentle seer
Over meadow and moor and mere,
Like a saddening love, the spell is dear:
Sweetly sings cuckoo.

It breathes a tale of the flowers of May,
Of violet bank and primrose brae,

Cuckoo!

Woods with the hyacinth misty blue,
Fields with the daisy white, and the dew
Bright as the day the world was new:
Blithely calls cuckoo.

Snow-white showers of anemones
Have blown beneath the budding trees—

Cuckoo!

The sombre pines to life have sprung,
And all with tender tassels hung,
Have sunlight o'er their shadows flung:
Summer sings cuckoo.

Far hath fled the winter's ruth;
Winds breathe softly from the south:

Cuckoo!

Woodlands gladden every scene,
With their shades of tender green,
Of gold and bronzo, in holt and dean:
Mellow calls cuckoo.

O'er the still and distant down,
Where the heath is black and brown—

Cuckoo!

Where the birch with drooping head,
And the stunted oaks are spread,
Thinly 'twixt the moor and mead,
Gladsome calls cuckoo.

Floating o'er the braiding corn,
In the peaceful eve and morn,

Cuckoo!

As from sprite that flitteth by,
Singing sweetly in a sigh,
Weird and strange the melody:
Quaintly calls cuckoo!

J. H. P.

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A HOLIDAY CRUISE.

How few there are among weary Londoners who ever take to a short sea-voyage as a cure for overwork and brain-strain. Not to see a newspaper for a week, to forget house bills, to quit the rush and hurry of the great thoroughfares in order to breathe the purest air on our planet—is surely in itself temptation enough. And all this is to be had without weary poring over time-tables and guide-books, or the dusty rattle of long railway journeys. We have only to invest in a mackintosh, to commit ourselves to a coasting-steamer, and enjoy a four days' cruise through some of the wildest coast-scenery in the British Islands. The boats we have in our mind are no 'crank' cockles, but comport themselves well during their weekly voyages from London (Regent's Canal Dock) to Liverpool, *via* Plymouth, Falmouth, and round the west coast of England; or from Liverpool (Trafalgar Dock) to London. We shall suppose ourselves on board, say the good ship *Faithful*,* with two hours on our hands wherein to stow our luggage, study the bearings of our berth, and the geography of our steamer. Even the mysteries of loading have an interest and humour all their own.

Through the autumnal mist, the setting sun is gilding the Victoria Tower, and setting the ball and cross of St Paul's in a blaze. The tide is flowing, and the swarms of mudlarks, mere bags of bone, are being driven from their oozy playgrounds by the rising water. All is bustle. We lie under the lee of a big ship, with giant yardarms that stretch half across the basin, and rigging that seems one endless tracery of confused 'cat's-cradle.' As we work ourselves riverwards, through waters coloured with strange prismatic tints by floating oils, edging our way out with infinite tact and judgment, our steamer takes her course through flocks of barges manned by grimy

men, who throw towards us good-humoured but broad sallies of wit. The *Energy*, a floating trough black as the coal she carries, lies obstinately across our bows; while the *Empress of Shadwell*, filled with high-heaped deals, clings close to the side of the *Pretty Jane*, until the summary application of a stout rope and the steam-winch despatches the two in unseemly haste astern of us, and leaves the way clear to the dock-gates. And then, just as we are preparing to turn down the river, an aimless waif, slowly revolving as it drifts up-stream with the tide, slews round across our cut-water, and gives our patient skipper a final vexation.

Meantime, the passengers—young men and maidens, old men and (a few) children, are safe on board; and the stewardess, her eyes like those of Argus, her hands numberless apparently as those of Briareus, handles her clients with judgment. The captain from India insists on a change of berth, his present allotment being too near the propeller to suit his delicate wife. Having disposed of the captain, the stewardess sternly warns a clamant Scotchman that he must sleep in the lifeboat if he would find a resting-place at all. His name is the last on her list, and he has Hobson's choice. To the young ladies, she is more than a mother. Rugs are unrolled, and strange head-coverings produced. The detachment of London clerks on holiday ask erratic and irrelevant questions of the officers, and receive in the stir of departure but scant courtesy, not undeservedly; but the frayed and scrappy answers seem to satisfy them. And soon almost before we know we are well east off, we have visions of brightly-lighted rooms and convivial parties in the famous Greenwich hosteleries.

The coils of rope, which lie about our deck like heaps of newly caught conger eels, are soon in apple-pie order. The winch has ceased to rattle and scream. Now and again, a ghostly steamer, with glittering eyes of red and green, glides out of the gloom ahead and vanishes astern. One great four-masted steamship passes us, waking the echoes with her fog-horn,

* The agents are J. D. Hewitt & Co., 101 Leadenhall Street, London; or Samuel Hough, 25 Water Street, Liverpool.

hoarsely and fitfully blowing like some monster Belemoth. We slide by tall barques that are being towed towards the sea by panting steam-tugs. The dark masses of canvas flap eerily as the sailors spread them, ready for the time when the tow-line is cast off and the ship spreads her wings at the Nore. And as the fragrant breeze brings the scent of the Kentish hayfields across the broadening river at Gravesend, we turn in, and sleep to the rhythmic hum of the screw, only broken by the commands of the captain on the bridge, as he threads his way through fleets of fishing-boats or coasting-schooners lying wind-bound.

It is useless to hope to lie late on board ship. Before daylight, the sailors are giving the decks their bath; and what healthier for stout limbs and good nerves than a douche of fresh salt water from the hose, if one can set the teeth and bear a sharp shock? The sun is not yet up; and the mate on the bridge, the look-out man and the swabbers, are the only witnesses of our improvised 'tub.' Strange to say, it is a new experience to them, as to us. And then we climb to the bridge, and find we are well off Ramsgate, the Dover cliffs lying like a faint cloud on our starboard bow. And what a sunrise! Surely not even the colouring of the Alps, as the sunbeams steal down the slopes and precipices, can equal the cloud-effects of a dawn at sea. Gradually the North Foreland light pales as the purple east grows violet—then pale blue—then a sudden flood of gold as the sun rises. The cloud-bank lying to the west far away over the Sussex Weald is tinged with a glowing pink, and the cliffs stand out against the misty distance, a ribbon-like streak of dazzling whiteness. The Downs are full of wind-bound ships, and the air is crisp and fresh with promise of a glowing noon.

But the stewardess is already stirring, willing and ready to dispense a welcome cup of steaming coffee—very necessary, for breakfast is more than three hours distant. And so we slip by dreary Dungeness, with its shuddering associations of wreck and disaster. Shingle stretches for miles, only dotted here and there with quaint-shaped towers and pyramids of tarred timbers, landmarks for the fishermen, whose boats are drawn up in front of the little villages, each a mere handful of squat cottages, which at intervals fringe the bay. Then Dover, the castle standing out bold and clean-cut against the sky; and Folkestone, with the white funnels of the mail-boats topping the pier. And then from Beachy Head, with its cruel fringe of reefs, and the caves, dug by some philanthropist in the past for shipwrecked sailors, showing like portholes in the cliffs' white sides, we stand boldly across for the Isle of Wight. So the first act in our little play closes, and we go below, eager for the hospitable fare provided in plenty in the saloon.

Quaint enough are the experiences of the passengers. One had severely 'boomped' his head, he told us, in climbing to his berth. Two bright young girls travelling northward by sea for the sake of their father's health, were grieving because their store of novels had been left behind. Another, a San Franciscan, having engaged a berth in next week's 'White Star,' has made a little business at Falmouth the excuse for a passing glimpse of the coast-

scenery of the old country. We warn him that it may not perhaps beat the Hudson, but it is better and healthier travelling than even his favourite Pullman. On the whole, we are a sufficiently jolly family.

The Sunday afternoon finds us running by the Undercliff, close to the Ventnor promenade, whence on a famous other Sunday, a few years ago, the last was seen of the hapless *Eurydice*. Even now, under the white lighthouse on St Catherine's Point, we can see the sailor-folk gathering up the timber of a wreck, the gaunt ribs of which stand up from the breakers. A snub-nosed but stately man-of-war passes close, her yardarms mathematically squared, and her cream-coloured funnel leaving only a genteel streak of smoke astern. She wears a bold, look-the-world-in-the-face air, as she steams by within a bare hundred yards of our more humble craft. My lordly friend, we could give you three knots an hour and beat you 'hands down,' for all your princely pride, and iron, plates, and trim blue-jackets, and bright brass fittings, and twin screws.

Our captain is no fair-weather sailor, as our experiences showed, but holds a pilot's certificate for all the great ports in the kingdom. He is watching the weather rather anxiously, though. The sun is sinking in a watery sky; the 'mare's-tail' clouds are streaming from the horizon to the zenith, and the glass is falling fast. The young ladies have not missed their novels much; but they do not look quite so much at home as in the early morning, and wear a preoccupied look. In fact, it is rougher than early in the day. The Anglo-Indian's wife retires to her berth prematurely soon. We who are good sailors, only turn in when we have sighted the Eddystone, and are within a few hours of Plymouth. Here we have time for a bathe and a stroll on the Hoe, and a few purchases from an early newsvendor.

As we sail round Mount Edgecombe, and stand out for Falmouth, the wind is rising, and the spindrift is already beginning to fly. Squally rain-gusts fleet by us up Channel, and mackintosh-costume is the order of the day. But the pipe of our cheery skipper is not quenched nor his general force abated, and he tells us how, a fortnight ago, all at short notice, the princess of the Lyceum came on board and asked for a passage. There was no denying Portia. But the steamer was full; and in despair he stowed the great actress's many trunks; and for want of a spare berth, gave up to her his own snug chart-house and sanctum on the bridge, the shrine of his household gods, and went bedless himself; and she had been made so much at home, that she had regretted when her short voyage was over, and had gone back to hard work with fresh stores of energy and a new bloom on her cheek.

An hour or two at picturesque Falmouth, where we ship a lifeboat for the North, and we steam away for two eventful days before we touch land again. Out in mid-channel we can see the Wolf lighthouse standing on the grim rock which has moaned and roared from its mysterious cavern the knell of so many homeward-bound ships sunk in the deep waters that surround it on every side. What treasure-trove those 'roaring walls' of this Cornish Scylla must contain! And then we pass the 'Rumal' stone, marked by a tolling

bell, that dips and springs in its cradle-belfry, sending a shiver through us as we think how that doleful sound right ahead would strike the heart of a sea-captain straining his eyes through a dense sea-fog or a driving snow-storm in December, to catch a glimpse of the electric light on the Lizard. And now the night begins to fall, with a gale rising.

Though our voyage has been exceptionally rough, the romance of the weather is well worth the study. We are close in to the haggard spine of rocks which are the extremity of England. The white lighthouse is drenched every other minute in columns of spray. The man that is cleaning the glass is discernible as he holds on to the light rail, the collar of the tower. These poor fellows have three months' provisions in store; for though the keepers of lighthouses are supposed to be changed once a month, the Trinity relieving yacht is unable, as often as not, to land the fresh watchmen, and steams by, leaving the three for another spell of Atlantic buffeting. On the black peaked reefs of rocks, the white gulls are in full conclave to-night; and the 'Shark's Fin,' smallest reef of the group, usually a black band in the blue waters, is merely a hundred yards of churned creamy surf. The storm-fiends seem to be holding a Walpurgis night; and the thought just strikes one, Suppose our machinery were to break down! In the distance, we can see the gleam of the Longships lightship, whose hardy crew are wont to complain of the ceaseless fierceness of the weather and the unrelenting roar of the storm-winds. But our steamer rides the waves like a duck.

It is a sensation that will last a lifetime to watch the night through with the look-out man in the bows, and see the moon break through the flying clouds, and stretch a long band of glittering light across the hurrying waves. The streaming smoke from our funnel stands out against the moonlight; while we drive on indifferent to the blows of the waves, the lashing water falling on our deck, and the howling 'ugly' night. As the bows dip, the screw plays with a buzz. Our sailor-companion warns us that a squall is coming. And in a moment his words are verified. For five minutes the cordage sings and strains, and a few drops of stinging rain whistle by and in our faces. And then as suddenly the moonlight is bright again, and shows us the whole length of the pitching steamer. Soon after, we see the Cunard steamer, bound for Havre and the Mediterranean, pass us and cross the moon-track, her lines as elegant as those of a racing yacht. And thereafter we think we have had enough of wind and weather, and turn in to sleep sound. When we wake, we find ourselves within sight of the Welsh mountains, and Bardsey Island ahead; and in the far distance, the least faint glimpse of the hills of Wexford.

As we cross the mouth of Cardigan Bay, we can see the slopes of tourist-trod Snowdon, and the saddle of the 'Rivals,' grandest of ranges, as yet undescended by the autumnal alpenstock. Barren and dreary enough seem the moors of the Welsh coast after the Sussex weald; uninviting and inhospitable. The wind is north-west, and the American steamers are hugging the Irish coast for smoother water's sake. The Isle of Man is seen far away to westward towards the sunset.

As we round the Skerries and signal our number, the granite headland of Holyhead provokes enthusiasm even in the stolid breast of the now convalescent Anglo-Indian. We pass through the 'race' of treacherous choppy water off the harbour, and by the 'Mouse' rock, familiar to voyagers Dublinwards. As we cross the bar of the Mersey, an Inman steamer passes close, with picturesque dots of electric light streaming from her saloon; and in her wake a fleet of lesser steamers sailing at high water; destined to scatter to the four points of the compass after a few hours' companionship.

But the romance is over. Bidston light is mere prose after the poetry of the Longships. The fragrant sea-air has given place to the odours of the great estuary; and as our whistle sounds, the captain clears the bridge with infinite patience, warps us alongside the dock; and the varied memories of our four days' cruise fade as we wish our friends good-night, and go our several ways.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXIX.—'I AM AFRAID, SIR, IT IS TALKED ABOUT.'

CHEAPSIDE was unusually crowded that afternoon, and both men being eager to get on, the impediments to traffic exaggerated themselves, and became irritating. Garling lifted the little trap in the roof of the cab and snarled at the driver. 'Drive!' The driver being also irritated by the obstacles he met, snarled back at him, and picking his way among cabs, omnibuses, and wagons, cast loose anathemas right and left as boys throw crackers. In a little time they got behind an omnibus, and the driver being compelled to adapt his speed to that of the vehicle before him, broke in a wordy hailstorm on the conductor, who, turning upon him a smiling visage, winked slowly and laboriously, and condescended no other answer. The cabman, naturally incensed, slanged him with all the eloquence of wrath. The omnibus stopped to pick up a stout old lady; and the conductor taking advantage of the pause, addressed the driver of the hansom with smooth satire: 'You shouldn't want to take the bread out of poor folks' mouths, your Royal Highness. Get down, and let the cabman drive. He's used to it.'

Garling looked up at the sound of the voice, and saw Hiram Search. Hiram, beaming all over with the consciousness of his own humour, caught Garling's eye at that moment, and raised his hat to him with a genial flourish. Lumby sat back in the cab with his arms across his breast, trying to be calm, but relapsing into his old flurried condition—anxious to be in time. The bus got into motion again, and the cab followed, slowly, the cabman swearing as terribly as, according to Captain Shandy, our army did in Flanders. Hiram, with much apparent interest, demanded to know where he preached on Sundays; and winked at Garling, as if to ask him what he thought of that, in the way of genteel repartee. There was almost nothing but the use's length between Garling and the destroyer of his plans, and to see him there thus insolently gleeful and familiar, was more than

gall and wornwood. The 'bus being pulled up very suddenly, the cab-horse's nose almost entered at the window. 'Going to Whitechapel?' asked Hiram of the driver sweetly. 'Don't keep us waiting. Get in, sir, get in. We'll take care of you.' Having delivered himself of this sally, he winked again at Garling, who was by this time half mad with rage, and only held himself in by a supreme effort.

'Hiram!' cried a faint pleading voice from the pavement, and a hand touched the conductor's arm as he swung by his strap, inspecting the crowd with a knowing eye, as if he were choosing prize passengers. He turned, and there was Mary, looking pale and frightened, and bearing on her face the mark of recent tears. Hiram rang his bell to stop the omnibus, and leaped to the pavement. Garling saw the little figure also, and maddened, feeling that his dead wife's vengeance was indeed beginning, in spite of her forgiveness. But a second later, or less, the sight of the little satchel Mary carried in her hand banished all other things from his mind. He had until that moment forgotten it as completely as though it had been of no value. The shock of detection, the struggle for self-mastery, the shame and rage which had crowded on him since he had felt his employer's arresting and accusing hand, had left no room for the thought of minor troubles.

'What is it?' cried Hiram, bending over the worn face. 'What is it?'

'He has left me!' she answered. 'The house is locked.' Her lips were trembling; and he, forgetting where he stood, took both her hands in his, and felt them cold. 'I don't know where to go. He said we were going to Southampton, and put me in the train, and left me.'

'Left you!' cried Hiram. 'Why, there he is!'

'Where?' she asked, shrinking to him as if from some imagined fear.

At that moment Garling's hand was laid upon the satchel. 'Give this to me!' he said hoarsely. 'Go home—go home!' She held tightly to the bag; but he wrenched it from her hand, and returned to the cab. 'Drive on!' he cried with a terrible execration, standing behind the splash-board and facing the driver. The cabman shook his head up and down with a countenance in which mute appeal against the unreasonableness of this direction was blent with scorn and pity.

'What is all this?' asked Lumby, as Garling threw himself into the seat again.

'What is it?' mocked Garling, gnashing at him. 'Ask what it was to-morrow.'

Lumby looked at him with scornful wonder, not unmixed with fear. 'We shall be late,' he said. 'Had we not better walk?'

They left the cab together; and Garling snarled to the driver to go to the offices for payment, and strove, whilst Lumby held his arm, to struggle through the crowd. But the crowd had on a sudden grown dense. There was a dead-lock in the horseway, and on the footpath the people were crushed together looking at it. The beginning of anger, as the wise man said, is like the letting in of waters, and Garling was now fairly raging. Having once begun to surrender his self-control, he became for the moment helpless to control himself at all, and struggled like a madman. At last they reached the limits of

the crowd, and found a straight course before them; when suddenly, loud and clear clanged out the clock of Bow Church, striking the hour. At that they turned pale faces on each other, and Lumby released Garling's arm. The great bell of Paul's followed, booming above the roar of the street and the general babel of sound only for the ears that waited for it. And in both minds the same imagined sight was present; each saw the image of a closing bank door.

'It will be known before nightfall,' panted Lumby, fixing his haggard eyes on Garling in wild accusation.

'Why should it?' he responded. 'You have everything in hand, and it will be a passing stroke at the worst. Be at the Bank by ten o'clock in the morning.'

The merchant turned, thrusting the drafts into his breast-pocket, and walked back, with bent head, despondent face, and heavy heart; and his mechanical steps led him to the offices. It was not a difficult thing for Garling to hang behind and lose his late employer for a moment in the crowd. He was absent from the merchant's thoughts, and that made the task still easier. And having lost him for a moment, it was the easiest thing in the world to slip into a handsome cab outside the block and drive away. Ample need to drive away, as matters stood. For a whisper once started in the City, would swell ere long into a roar, and in that roar he could already hear in fancy his own name. He would be gone before the storm could burst. The House would weather it easily enough, and within his grinding teeth he bann'd the House. But his own crime would be known, and his defeat. There was the sting he dreaded. Before that, he was a coward. He could have borne to be spoken of as a successful scoundrel; but to be pointed at as a detected rogue, compelled to resign his booty, and then scornfully dismissed, would have been unendurable, *was* unendurable to think of, and had yet to be endured.

There was whispering and putting of heads together in the offices of Lumby and Lumby. Barnes sat in Garling's seat, and there was a look of amazed misery upon his face which struck all who saw him there. The head of the firm had been locked in his own room all day; and after the coming of the Bank messenger, he had gone out tremulous and fevered, and had returned as if from a fruitless errand, hanging his head, and looking like a ghost. Garling, even the impenetrable Garling, had looked worn and gray. There was a vague suspicion as to what these portents might mean, which filled the very air, and made the whisperings needless to carry it from mind to mind. And, to set on all surmise the seal of dreadful certainty, it was known somehow before five o'clock by everybody in the place, down to the very messengers, that just before the closing of the Bank a cheque had been presented and returned with the statement that there were no effects to meet it. The flying Garling might well have foreseen this last disaster. But not everybody in the place knew of this open shame to the old craft which had weathered so many storms and sailed triumphantly through so much evil weather since it was launched one hundred and thirty years ago. Not the master of the ship. No man

told him as yet of that disaster. He sat alone, separated from the grieving, faithful Barnes, only by the sliding panel of corrugated glass. The time for departure had gone by; but Barnes waited, fain to offer consolation, if he had but dared, or known how to offer it. At length he went round by the corridor and tapped humbly at the door. 'Come in,' cried the merchant in a dejected voice, and Barnes entered.

'What are your instructions for to-morrow, sir?' asked Barnes.

'You will hold the same place,' returned his employer, looking up at him with a withered smile. 'You may consider yourself promoted permanently.—Where is Garling?' he asked suddenly, rising with a startled air.

'Mr Garling has not returned,' answered Barnes, 'since you and he went out an hour ago.'

'Not returned!' said Lumby, taking one quick step forward and halting suddenly. 'No matter.—Mr Barnes!'

'Yes, sir.'

'We will go through matters to-morrow, and I shall have to place some confidences in you, which I shall rely upon you to respect.'

Barnes's heart ached. Was it possible Lumby did not know that the expected crash was the town's talk already?

'We have passed through a grave crisis, which has left almost everything disarranged, and there will be work to do for weeks to come. We will talk of these things to-morrow. I have had a time of great anxiety, and I am tired.'

Barnes's face brightened, and he said eagerly: 'You will be able to put things straight again, sir?'

The merchant looked at him wonderingly. 'What do you know about this matter, Mr Barnes?' There was no one to hear their talk, but by instinct he closed the door.

'The cheque presented at the Bank last thing this afternoon, sir. It is talked about already. I am told that Rawlings & Co., relying on the name of the firm, got it cashed privately after it was refused by the Bank. They were always very questionable people, sir, Rawlings & Co.'

'The cheque?' said the merchant, 'refused this afternoon? Why, what is this?'

'Is it possible that you don't know, sir?' cried Barnes. 'Rawlings was paid by cheque yesterday—two, five, five, odd. The cheque was presented this afternoon, and the Bank returned it, marked "No effects." I am afraid, sir, it is talked about.'

Lumby strode up and down the room, deeply moved by this discovery. 'This is bad news, Barnes,' he said, 'bad news. I had hoped to escape anything of that sort. But it will be all right to-morrow. Be here at the usual time in the morning. If you hear any rumour against the solidity of the firm, I authorise you to offer it the fullest and roundest denial. Do you hear?—the fullest and roundest denial. You shall know all to-morrow. I am too fatigued to attend to business now.—Good-night.'

'Good-night, sir,' returned Barnes, and went his way, lifted up in spirit, but still puzzled. 'If he heard any rumour'—so ran the merchant's words. Rumour? There was no rumour, but a downright clamant roar, and wherever Barnes went, he heard it. Wherever he heard it, he denied it; as a matter of personal knowledge, he

denied it; being personally in the full confidence of the firm, he assured assailants right and left that there was nothing in it. And as when wind and tide go contrary ways there is a greater tumult than when both go together, this authoritative contradiction made the roar the louder, and spread it wider.

Lumby, left alone, raised his face towards the skylight in a sort of passionate exultation and triumph for a moment, and drooped it again in anguish. The House was saved; heaven had been merciful, villainy had been discomfited, and the House was saved; but the good old name was soiled. The British merchant found a doubt upon his name as intolerable as the ermine finds a spot upon its fur. Never a breath upon the name until to-day, and now it was soiled—soiled! How could the return of a cheque from such a House fail to be talked of? That awful cord began to tighten and loosen in his brain again, and his eyes grew hot and his hands clammy. He entered the cashier's room, intending to place the drafts in the safe, and then go home to his hotel and send for a physician. But having opened the safe, the confession Garling had written lay before him, and he must needs take it up and look at the rogue's balance-sheet at the end. From it he referred to the drafts, to see if between them they made up the sum set down there. Next, after standing for a while irresolute, he drew the gigantic ledger from its place, and laying it on the table, turned to the leaf on which he had first fixed the fraud, and compared the pencilled marks he had made upon the margin with Garling's first entry. The two exactly tallied. He stooped above the book a moment, holding the drafts and the confession in his hands, then dropped them on the broad ruled leaves, and knitting his fingers, pressed both palms above his forehead, and took a step or two across the room and back again. There was a hunted feeling in his mind, a hurry and confusion, a dim sense that any moment might bring shipwreck, that there were things to do, which being done, would avert all chance of mischief; but like a man in a nightmare, he could only grope in thought, and everything was blind and dark. What was the fear that threatened him? Where was the way of safety? If this hideous pain would only let him think a while! He reeled a little, and stretching out his hands, caught one side of the great ledger and steadied himself by it. The cord in his head was growing tenser, and the fear that followed him drew nearer. Tenser grew the cord, tenser, tenser, until at last it snapped, and the merchant, with one blind stagger sideways, closed the ledger with unconscious hands and fell huddled on the floor.

(To be continued.)

THE HERRING.

In a country like ours, the importance of the sea-fisheries can scarcely be over-estimated. Mr De Caux, in his history of the *Herring and the Herring-fishery* (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.), appeals to a wide public, and brings before the notice of the reader very many interesting and novel facts, which his long experience as a fish-salesman at Yarmouth has enabled him to collect and verify.

Our fisheries employ upon an average on sea and shore upwards of two hundred and ten thousand persons, who being principally heads of families, represent a population of more than three times that amount. These men a fishing-fleet of thirty thousand vessels, the greater part of which consists of herring-boats. This fleet is of two hundred and eighty thousand tons burden; and the capital employed in its outfit would suffice to farm six million acres of land, or one-sixth of the land at present under cultivation in Great Britain, calculating the necessary outlay for that at ten pounds an acre. Mr De Caux arrives at this conclusion from the consideration that land is indestructible, and that the improvements upon it are to a certain extent permanent; while fishing boats and gear depreciate so rapidly, that all fishing-property actually employed at sea has virtually to be replaced every eight or nine years. Every operation connected with fishing, whether it be boat building or repairing, or the making and mending of fishing-tackle, requires skilled and intelligent labour; even such an apparently simple operation as counting the herrings landed at the fish-wharf at Great Yarmouth in the course of one season, costing upwards of two thousand two hundred pounds.

Comparatively little is known of the habits of sea-fishes. Some naturalists have divided them into three classes—those which invariably live at the bottom of the sea; those which invariably live in mid-water; and those which invariably live at or near the surface. This classification, Mr De Caux considers very misleading; and is so far from being the fact, that herring and mackerel, which are classed as surface-swimmers, are often caught in trawl-nets which drag the bottom. As a rule, fishes have keen sight, but only possess the sense of hearing in a very limited degree. All fish are carnivorous; the large prey upon the small; and both large and small feed upon the different species of invertebrates that at certain seasons swarm in incalculable myriads in the sea.

The herring is the most important of all the fish that swim in our seas. It abounds through an ocean area stretching from France to the North Cape, and in the North Atlantic Ocean between forty and seventy degrees of latitude. It is a rare fish on the southern coast of Greenland, and on the northern coast only a small variety is found. The old idea that the Polar Sea was the chosen home of the herring, and that it resorted to our shores only for the sake of spawning, is now entirely exploded; but of its habits little is as yet accurately known. It is gregarious, as most fishes are, and swims in shoals; and even among those which swim around our shores, there are many varieties, the Loeh Fyne herring being quite different from the small black-nosed species caught off the coast of Norfolk, and these again varying considerably from the herring caught off Kimblington or Cromer Knowl. Their movements, as Mr De Caux, with much appearance of truth, conjectures, depend altogether upon the temperature of the water and the supply of food.

The spawning of herrings has long been a vexed question with naturalists, and in spite of many theories confidently advanced, it is so still. Mr De Caux, from long and careful observation,

has been led to conclude, among other things, that herrings spawn much oftener than once a year; and that when they leave the deep water and come inshore, as they undoubtedly do in the late summer and early autumn months, it is not for the purpose of spawning, but in pursuit of the multitudes of medusæ of different kinds that then appear along our coasts. 'In my opinion,' he says, 'herrings spawn wherever they may happen to be at the time they are ripe, whether they be in deep water, over a sandbank, or near to the shore.' The general idea that herring-spawn is invariably deposited at the bottom of the sea, is erroneous, for much of it floats at the surface of the water, and is vivified there. When engaged in catching herrings that were ripe for spawning, fishermen have sometimes observed the sea to have a milky appearance; and on drawing buckets filled with this water on board, they have found it to be not only full of spawn, but of live herring-fry newly hatched. This fact shows that on some occasions at least the herring-spawn vivifies and develops near the surface of the water.

That herrings spawn at least twice a year, is certain; and our author is inclined to believe that they spawn all the year round, 'and that with the exception of short intervals to recuperate their physical powers, they are always either secreting spawn or spawning.' The period of time which elapses between the spawning and the hatching of the fry, is various; Mr De Caux sets it down as usually from three to four weeks, though something depends upon the time of year and the temperature of the water. Extreme cold retards the process, and moderate heat facilitates it. Sprats, he considers not as small herrings, but as an entirely distinct species; and instead of giving the herring seven years to arrive at maturity, as some writers have done, he thinks that it is full grown within the twelvemonth. The largest herrings are taken off the coast of Labrador. Those caught on our eastern coasts rarely exceed ten or eleven inches in length; and Mr De Caux, in the millions of herring that have passed under his observation, never saw one longer than fifteen and a half inches.

Our herring-fishery is believed to have originated on the east coast, somewhere near the place where Great Yarmouth now stands. Such a fishery was already an institution in the time of the Romans, who considered the herrings caught off this coast a dainty dish. About the beginning of the Christian era, the sandbank on which Great Yarmouth now stands first began to appear above the surface of the waves, and gradually became a favourite resort of fishermen, particularly during the latter part of the Roman occupation, as the Roman garrison at the mouth of the Yare afforded them protection from pirates. The advent of the Saxons gave a fresh impetus to the herring-fishery; and early in the sixth century the Saxons built a stronghold on the sandbank, and thus laid the foundations of a herring emporium, which has continued to flourish ever since.

In 1755, the Yarmouth and Lowestoft fish-curers were threatened with serious competition in their own peculiar trade of curing red herrings, by the Scotch and Manx. Large smoke-houses were established for the purpose in Scotland

and the Isle of Man; but after a short trial, it was found necessary to disuse them, the quality of the herring caught being too inferior for smoking purposes. In 1794 great quantities of herrings were caught in the Forth, and a new epoch in the trade was inaugurated. Instead of being cured upon the spot, the fresh herrings were packed in ice and sent to London in boxes by fast-sailing vessels. The use of ice as a preservative for fish in a fresh state, had been discovered a few years before, in 1780, by a Scotchman named Dempster, who preserved salmon in this way.

During the present century, especially after the railway system came into active operation, herring-fisheries have developed largely, and are in a very prosperous state all along the coasts of the northern seas and in the northern parts of America. No nation has, however, made such progress in this particular branch of industry as the Scotch; the ancient mantle of Great Yarmouth has fallen upon them, and they are now by far the greatest herring-fishers in the world. 'They possess the enormous number of fourteen thousand five hundred herring-boats, which are manned by some fifty thousand men and boys; and the season of 1880 was the heaviest they have ever known.' The season of 1881 will long be remembered by the fishermen off the east coast of Scotland, for then occurred what was perhaps the most violent and fatal storm ever known, and not a fishing-village in the district affected but was more or less desolated by its ravages.

The herring-fishery partakes somewhat of the nature of a lottery—one boat may have a great haul; and another at no great distance from it, equally well found and well manned, may catch so few as barely to pay her expenses. In 1857, a boat belonging to Yarmouth, with ninety-one nets, caught so many herring, that it was impossible for her to carry them; and after filling the boat, the rest were thrown into the sea. In 1880, a French fisherman caught four hundred and twenty barrels; and in the early part of August 1881, a French fishing-boat, the *Gabrielle*, after taking on board as many as she could carry, had still such a multitude of fish left in the nets, that her crew were obliged to shake the remainder into the sea.

In 1835, a fish-curer of the name of Bishop discovered by chance the way to make Yarmouth bloaters. One night, after his workpeople had left, he came upon a small quantity of prime herring that had been overlooked. Unwilling to lose them, he sprinkled a little salt over them, spitted them, and hung them up all night in a smoke-house in which an oak-billet was burning. Next morning, he awoke to find himself famous in the annals of the herring-trade, as the happy possessor of the first Yarmouth bloaters, the cure of which he henceforth made his special pursuit. In the same accidental way, Newcastle kippers were discovered in 1843 by Mr John Woodger of Newcastle.

The period when herring-nets were invented is not known; but the square mesh used for them is much the same in all countries. Formerly, they were made by the hand, of hemp; but now they are made by machinery, and invariably of cotton, which is found to be more suitable. The inventor of the herring-net loom was a

Scotch working-man named James Paterson, who was born at Musselburgh towards the close of the last century. His greatest difficulty in perfecting his machine was the formation of a knot that would not slip. He never could succeed in making one similar to that made by the hand, although he made one firm enough for his purpose; but what baffled him all his life, was subsequently discovered by Walter Ritchie, a working plasterer in Leith, and the machine-made knots now exactly resemble those made by the hand. Musselburgh is now the centre of a large trade in nets, the factory of Messrs J. & W. Stuart being one of the best known in the country.

The future of our sea-fisheries is of course an object of the greatest interest to the nation at large; and it is of vital importance to avoid the needless destruction of fry and small fish, lest in this case, as in others, 'wilful waste should lead to woful want.' To insure this desirable end, Mr De Caux is of opinion that nets of a wider mesh than those presently in use should be made compulsory, so that only large herring be captured. He also thinks that shell-fish should be protected, especially mussels, as the demand for these mollusks greatly exceeds the supply. They are used for bait, and one Scotch fishing-boat alone requires five million annually. The foreshores around our island are admirably calculated for mussel-farms, and should be utilised in this manner as soon as possible. Our thrifty neighbours in France have long been alive to the advantage of this, and one mussel-farm at Aiguillon, which has been systematically cultivated since the thirteenth century, yields at present a yearly revenue of fifty thousand pounds.

THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

'O MONSIEUR, in mercy's sake, delay not an instant!' cried Madeleine.

The General drew forth a printed document, at the head of which the word 'Pardon' was conspicuous in huge letters. He inserted the name of Antoine Duroc, and hastily signed his own name to the parchment. 'I have taken a great deal upon myself, young woman,' he said, as he handed the document to Madeleine. 'But hasten with this pardon to the prison. Lose no time, or you will arrive too late. If, on your arrival, the prisoners have been removed, hasten to present the pardon to the officer in command of the firing-party.—Yet stay—you know not the way about Paris.'

'My carriage is in waiting, Monsieur le Général,' said the préfet. 'My coachman will drive the young woman to the prison. I will accompany her thither.'

'It is unnecessary, Monsieur le Sous-préfet,' said the General. 'A commissionaire from this bureau shall accompany her. He will know how to proceed.'

A commissionaire was called, and instructed to present the pardon of Antoine Duroc to the chief jailer of La Roquette, or to the officer in command of the firing-party. But Madeleine insisted upon being herself the bearer of her

husband's pardon, and received the document from the commissioner. Then, bewildered between excess of joy, mingled with doubt and fear lest she should arrive too late, she followed the commissioner without waiting to express her thanks to the General.

The sous-préfet assisted her into the carriage, and wished her success; and then bade his coachman drive with all possible speed to La Roquette.

At length the prison of La Roquette was reached. The commissioner alighted from the vehicle, and ringing the large bell, demanded to see the chief jailer. But on stating his errand, he was informed that the condemned prisoners had already been marched to the place of execution. 'But there is yet time,' added the jailer. They have but just left. It is now half-past eleven o'clock. You have half an hour to spare, and the *fosse* is not far distant. But Madame must alight from the carriage and walk. The road is impassable to vehicles of any description.

On hearing these words, Madeleine sprang from the carriage, and conducted by the commissioner, hurried breathlessly on. 'You know the shortest road, Monsieur Commissaire,' she said. 'For heaven's sake, hasten on!'

The commissioner nodded assent. But he was a comparative stranger to that part of the city, and he soon missed his way. Leaving Madeleine, in a fever of dread and impatience, he went into a shop to inquire the way to the Place Voltaire. To the anxious girl he appeared to be so long absent, that she hastened after him. She found the shop after two or three inquiries; but when she reached it, the commissioner had quitted it to return to her, and had missed her. The streets were thronged with people. Madeleine, almost crazed with dread, passed amongst them, inquiring her way of one and then of another; but the directions she received only served further to bewilder her, and she wandered further and further astray. A church clock near by chimed the quarters. Madeleine listened breathlessly. 'Three-quarters!' she cried in a paroxysm of fear; 'only a quarter of an hour to spare! I shall be too late!'

She had turned into a by-street, which was almost deserted. Two working-men, carrying the tools necessary to their trade, were approaching her. They were the only individuals in the narrow street. As they drew near, she entreated them to guide her to the *fosse* where the prisoners were to be executed. Her quaint garb was calculated to attract attention in Paris, and the men supposed her to be a country girl who had come to the city on a holiday visit.

'What would'st thou do at the *fosse*?' asked one of the men. 'Is it a pleasure to thee to see poor, miserable, starving wretches shot down like dogs, because they demand a share of the wealth and food that of right belongs alike to all?' The man was hurrying on in disgust, when his companion remarked Madeleine's wild and distracted look.

'Perchance, Adolphe,' said he, 'the poor girl has reason to ask the way to the *fosse*. Maybe some friend or lover is doomed to be shot at noon. She looks as if she were crazed with grief.'

'Nay, then.—Is it so, young woman? Dost

wish to see the last of some unfortunate friend or relation? Whence comest thou?' asked the man Adolphe.

'I am a fisherwoman of Honfleur, Messieurs,' replied Madeleine. 'My husband has been falsely accused, and unjustly condemned to die. I bear his pardon, and have lost my way. I fear that I shall arrive too late! As you may some day crave for mercy, Messieurs, take pity upon me, and guide me to the spot. See, here is my husband's pardon;' and she drew forth the precious document from her bosom and held it before the two men.

'Poor woman! Thou art coming away from the Place Voltaire, where the *fosse* is situated,' said the man who had spoken last. 'Thou hast little time indeed to spare. But come with us; we will guide thee thither.' The men turned and quickened their steps, and Madeleine breathlessly followed them.

Meanwhile, the commissioner, on leaving the shop, could see nothing of the young woman whom he had told to wait his return. He hurried to and fro, and inquired for a young woman dressed in fisherwoman's costume; but all in vain. 'Perhaps,' thought he, 'the young woman has gone on to the *fosse* by herself, being too impatient to wait for me.'

At all events, he thought his wisest plan would be to hasten on; and if the young woman had not arrived when he reached the spot, to inform the officer in command of the troops that the prisoner Antoine Duroc was pardoned. It wanted but three minutes to twelve o'clock when he reached the *fosse*, around which a great crowd had assembled, and in which—their backs placed against a low mound—the doomed prisoners were already drawn up. Approaching a young lieutenant, who was coolly smoking a cigar, as he paced leisurely to and fro, the commissioner informed the young officer that a pardon had been granted to Antoine Duroc, one of the condemned prisoners, and begged him to stay the man's execution.

'Where is the pardon you speak of?' asked the officer. 'Produce it.'

'I do not have it with me,' replied the commissioner; and then he told how he had missed the young woman who was the wife of the pardoned man, and who carried the pardon in her bosom.

'You missed the young woman after you and she alighted from the carriage of Monsieur le Sous-préfet de Police?' said the officer. 'A likely story, is it not? Are you crazed, man, that you imagine the execution will be stayed at the bidding of the sous-préfet? Or is this some trick to gain time? Do you see yonder clock? The minute-hand points at two minutes to twelve. At twelve o'clock I shall give the order to fire.'

There was much jealousy existing at this period between the civil and military authorities, in consequence of the supreme authority being for the time in the hands of the latter; and when the commissioner spoke of the Sous-préfet de Police, the young officer seized the opportunity to snub the police authorities.

'You will repent it, Monsieur Lieutenant, if you do not delay,' replied the commissioner. 'The pardon is signed by Monsieur le Général

Beaumont, by whom I was directed to guide the young woman to this spot, that she might deliver to you her husband's pardon with her own hands.'

'Signed by whom?' asked the lieutenant.

The commissionaire repeated the name of the General.

'Monsieur le Capitaine!' called the lieutenant to another officer who was standing a short distance off.

The captain approached, and the two officers conferred together. They decided that they would at all events delay the execution for five minutes.

'Then I shall give the order to fire,' said the captain. 'I transgress my duty even in delaying five minutes, unless the pardon be produced.'

The church clock struck the hour of noon. The prisoners, when the first stroke sounded, were seen to shudder, and a low murmur was audible amongst the spectators; but Antoine Duroc, though his face was pale, stood firm and erect, awaiting his doom, while the greater number of the other prisoners appeared to be completely cowed. The handsome, manly appearance of the young fisherman, contrasting so remarkably with the miserable creatures who were doomed to die with him, had attracted the notice of many of the spectators, especially amongst the females. But they were not generally moved to pity. It appeared rather as if they regarded it as a novelty—a fresh attraction to see a handsome young man doomed to share the fate of the other prisoners, and yet so different from the generality of the wretched Communists who, almost every day, were doomed to death.

When, however, the last stroke of twelve had sounded and the order to fire was withheld, the low murmur among the spectators increased to a cry of anger and complaint. 'Why do not the soldiers fire?' they asked of one another. 'What is the cause of the delay? Are we to wait all day long?' And when it was whispered amongst them that a pardon had arrived for one of the doomed men—and it was suspected that the favoured individual was the handsome young fisherman Duroc—they betrayed manifest signs that they considered themselves defrauded of a portion of the spectacle they had assembled to witness. At length the five minutes of delay expired. The order was given to the soldiers to fall into rank and prepare to fire.

'The pardon will arrive, I assure you, Messieurs Officiers,' said the commissionaire. 'You had better yet further delay the execution.'

'I will wait two minutes longer, and no more,' replied the captain. 'I have already transgressed my orders. I must do my duty, pardon or no pardon. I have no business to know anything of it until I have seen the document.'

The prisoners had learned that one of their number was to receive his pardon, but they knew not whom, though they somehow suspected that it was the young fisherman who was to be pardoned, and they bitterly resented the favour shown to him by the government.

The two additional minutes of delay had expired. The soldiers drew up. The rattle of their arms was audible.

'Attention! Present arms!' shouted the officer in command, throwing away his half-smoked

cigar. Such events were now every-day affairs to him and his brother *militaires*. Still he hesitated to give the final dread order.

Tirez, the word *Tirez*—draw, or fire—was upon his lips, but it was not yet pronounced, when a young woman in a state of wild distraction appeared upon the scene. It was Madeleine.

'You are yet in time, Madame,' said one of the two men who had guided her to the spot. 'I feared we were too late.'

'Thank God!' exclaimed the young girl, raising her eyes and clasped hands to heaven. She caught sight of her husband. 'Antoine, my dear Antoine, my loved husband, thou art pardoned, thou art free!' she cried; and heedless of everything around her—seeing no one save her husband, she was rushing swiftly towards him, when the young lieutenant placed his hand, not unkindly, upon her shoulder and drew her gently back.

'Why do you stop me, Monsieur?' she fiercely cried. 'I go to embrace my husband, who is free. I have brought his pardon.'

'Will Madame produce the pardon?' said the young officer. 'If it be correct, the husband of Madame will be instantly liberated.'

The pardon was produced, and closely examined. The General's signature was well known to both the officers; and the young fisherman, to whom the whole affair appeared like an ugly dream, was set free.

Antoine could scarcely satisfy himself that he was awake, and that everything he beheld around him was reality; for he had heard nothing of his wife's arrival in Paris, and had believed her to be still waiting at Honfleur for his return.

'Is it a dream—a horrible dream?' he asked himself—the legacy, the visit to Paris, the assault of the mob, the rescue of the poor country lad, my own arrest, and trial, and condemnation—everything? These thoughts passed through his mind in an instant. He was dazed; his brain was bewildered; he staggered like a drunken man, and gazed wildly around him. He did not even respond to the embrace of his young wife!

Meanwhile, the spectators continued to murmur; and the miserable men who still awaited their doom scowled enviously and savagely upon him.

'Why is he pardoned, while the other poor wretches are left to meet their doom?' some of the spectators asked. The people were getting accustomed to such spectacles. Still, there were some among the female onlookers who sympathised with the young fisherman and his pretty wife, and wept tears of delight when Madeleine embraced her husband—as they would have done had they beheld such a scene in a theatre.

At length a soldier on furlough stepped forth from amongst the crowd and laid his hand upon Antoine's shoulder.

'Come, *mon brave*, come away,' said he, 'unless thou preferrest to remain to be shot.' And he led the young fisherman away from the *fosse*, Antoine walking like one in sleep.

Scarcely had they gone twenty paces beyond the mound in the rear of the *fosse*, when the sharp stern word of command was heard, instantly followed by the clang of arms and the report of a volley of musketry.

Antoine shuddered, and awoke, as it were,

instantly to consciousness. 'But for the pardon that arrived at the last moment,' he thought, 'that report had been my death-knell! I should be now lying a senseless clod stretched in the ditch!'

Madeleine uttered a sharp cry of horror and clung tightly to her husband's arm.

The soldier alone seemed to think nothing of the matter. 'Bear up! bear up, comrade,' he said kindly. 'I felt something as thou dost now, when, years ago, in the Crimea, I came near being shot by the Russians as a spy, and when two of my brother-soldiers, as innocent of the charge as I was, suffered death. But I must leave thee now. It will not do for me to be seen fraternising too closely with one who has been condemned as a Communist thief and assassin; though I believe thee to be as innocent of such a crime as I am. Bonjour, Monsieur—Madame, adieu!' And touching his shako, he turned aside, and left the newly restored husband and wife to themselves.

A solemn silence had succeeded the volley of musketry, and then there was a tramp of many feet, and a chattering of many voices, and the crowd dispersed, possibly to gather again and witness such another scene on the morrow. Some overlooked, and looked earnestly at the young fisherman and his wife as they passed them by; and one pretty girl stepped up to Madeleine and embraced her lovingly and placed a posy of wild-flowers in her hand.

Antoine and Madeleine had much to tell each other of what had occurred to them since they had parted in the railroad dépôt at Honfleur.

'My beloved husband,' said Madeleine when she ended her story, 'I felt a presentiment of approaching evil when I left thee at the dépôt to return home alone. Could I have had my will, I would gladly have forfeited thy old aunt's legacy, to have restrained thee from visiting this wicked city. But I cannot explain to thee what I felt when thy letter arrived in place of thyself!'

Antoine and Madeleine returned the next day to Honfleur, after having paid a visit to the fair and gentle daughter of the sous-préfet, to thank her for the generous sympathy which had induced her father to exert his influence with General Beaumont in Antoine's behalf. They cared little for the gaiety of Paris, where, amidst so much splendour and wealth, there is also so much poverty, misery, and crime; and determined never, of their own free-will, to set foot in it again. 'Adieu, Antoine!' said Madeleine, as her husband parted from her for his next voyage; 'I would rather trust thee with the wild sea, than with the people of that terrible city.'

BOOK GOSSIP.

In 1839, a book, written by an Indian administrative officer, was being printed in London, and in this book the Queen had become so interested that she directed the publisher to send her the work sheet by sheet, as it was passing through the press, for her perusal. The book thus distinguished by Her Majesty was the *Confessions of a Thug*, by Colonel Meadows Taylor, then home from India on sick-leave. It has since been read by thousands of readers, alternately charmed

by its graphic and faithful pictures of Indian life and scenery, and awed by the startling revelations of secret and systematised crime which its pages reveal. This was not the only work of its author, though it is that perhaps by which he is most widely known. He finally retired from active life in India, and died at Mentone in 1876; previous to which time, however, an autobiography which he had written was given to the world. It was an expensive work, in two volumes, and thus not within reach of many who would have been prepared to appreciate its pages. We are glad, therefore, to observe that a popular edition in one volume has now been issued of Colonel Taylor's *Story of My Life* (London: Blackwood and Sons); and we can recommend it heartily as a book not only interesting for its personal details, but of historical value for the insight which it gives into the internal administration of India during the last fifty years of the Honourable Company's rule.

Although Colonel Meadows Taylor never rose to a high rank in the civil and military administration of India, 'there were,' says Mr Henry Reeves, editor of the *Edinburgh Review* (who writes a preface to this edition), 'circumstances in his career not less remarkable than in the lives of greater men. He was one of the last of those who went out to India as simple adventurers—to use the term in no disparaging sense, for Clive and Dupleix were no more—and who achieved whatever success he had in life by his own energy and perseverance, independent of the patronage of the great Company or the authority of the Crown.' The story of his early life, as narrated by himself, is full of interest. He was comparatively a poor boy, his father having been reduced in the world by unfortunate commercial transactions; and he went out to India, at the first, in no higher capacity than that of a prospective merchant's apprentice. His first appointment proved illusory, and but for the services of kind friends, he would soon have been left entirely to his own resources. In 1824, and while still but sixteen years of age, he procured, from the Resident at Hyderabad, through the interest of friends, a commission in the army of his Highness the Nizam; and this proved to be the first step in a fairly successful military career. It was principally, however, as a magistrate and civil administrator that Colonel Taylor distinguished himself; and even at the very outset of his career he showed a readiness of resource, a firmness of character, and a native instinct towards justice, which were certainly remarkable in one so young. One instance may be given.

While still under twenty years of age, he was acting as Superintendent of Bazaars at Bolarum, in which capacity it was his duty to regulate the markets and the prices of grain, and to act generally as a judge in civil cases. In the course of a journey of inspection through the district, his tent was at one place beset by hundreds of pilgrims and travellers, crying loudly for justice against the flour-sellers, who not only gave short weight in flour, but adulterated it so completely with sand, that the cakes made of it were uneatable, and had to be thrown away. He privately sent for and bought samples of the flour, which he

tested, and found in all cases that it was like sand under his teeth. He thereupon ordered the dishonest merchants to be sent to him, with their baskets of flour, their weights and scales. 'Now,' said he gravely, 'each of you is to weigh out two pounds of flour.' This was done. 'Is it for the pilgrims?' asked one. 'No,' said the young magistrate quietly; 'you must eat it yourselves.' They saw that he was in earnest, and offered to pay any fine he might impose. 'Not so,' he replied; 'you have made many eat your flour, why should you object to eat it yourselves?' They were horribly frightened; and, amid the jeers and laughter of the bystanders, some of them actually began to eat, sputtering out the half-moistened flour, which could be heard crunching between their teeth. At last some of them flung themselves on their faces, abjectly beseeching pardon. Mr Taylor took surety of the flour-sellers that they would not again 'fill the mouths' of the pilgrims 'with dirt,' and so the episode terminated, no more complaints being afterwards heard of bad flour.

This natural sagacity stood Colonel Taylor in good stead on many other occasions, when more than his own life was in imminent danger; and the story of his adventures, difficulties, and triumphs, reads like a page of historical romance. He was proof against that curse of Anglo-Indian administration in those days—bribery; and though many tempting baits were offered him, he proved true to his honour, and carried that honour untarnished to the end.

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In the death of Emerson, America lost perhaps the most philosophical and thoughtful of her literary men. His works have been long and favourably known in this country, commanding the respect and admiration of thousands of thinking men and women. To Englishmen one of the most endearing features of Emerson's character is his early recognition and loving appreciation of our Thomas Carlyle, Emerson having indeed been among the first, either in the Old World or the New, to see into the depths of *Sartor Resartus*, and to acknowledge the breadth of thought, the manliness of character, the pitiful tenderness towards the poor and distressed ones of the earth, that existed under the satirical veil in which the large-hearted Professor Teufelsdröckh chose to envelop himself when he spoke with the public. Emerson gathered the chapters of *Sartor Resartus* from *Fraser's Magazine*, in which they first appeared, and had them printed and published in America at his own expense, afterwards remitting to Carlyle, at a time when such a gift was very acceptable, the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds as the profits arising from the sale of the first edition of the book.

Emerson visited this country for the first time in 1833; and while in Edinburgh, he was handed over to a young gentleman, a native of the place, who was to act as his guide through the scenes of historic and romantic interest that lie in and around the Northern Metropolis. The young man so introduced to the American writer was Alexander Ireland, who for many years subsequently filled the editorial chair of the *Manchester Examiner*. The intercourse thus begun was continued between them till Emerson's death. Mr

Ireland, now that his illustrious friend is departed, has thrown into book-form a number of reminiscences of their friendship, which he has published under the title of *In Memoriam: Ralph Waldo Emerson* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.). The little work cannot fail to attract and interest the admirers of Emerson in this country. It is composed of recollections of his visits to England in 1833, 1847-8, and 1872-3, and of extracts from unpublished letters, to which is prefixed a brief but admirable biography.

We have not space for lengthened extracts, but one anecdote may be given characteristic of Emerson's gentleness and patience, even under somewhat trying circumstances, towards those who differed from him. Some twenty years ago, he addressed a literary society at Middlebury, Vermont; and when he finished, the president called upon a clergyman to conclude the service with prayer. The latter, a Massachusetts minister, stepped into the pulpit which Mr Emerson had just left, and uttered a remarkable prayer, of which one sentence was: 'We beseech thee, O Lord, to deliver us from ever hearing any more such transcendental nonsense as we have just listened to from this sacred desk.' 'He seemed a very conscientious, plain-spoken man,' was Emerson's charitable comment on the clergyman and his utterances.

AN UNFASHIONABLE DINNER-PARTY.

SIXTEEN years ago, there was established in London (see *Chambers's Journal* for July 4, 1868), at 47 Earl Street, Lisson Grove, what would perhaps in those days have ventured to call itself an Institution; its object being to provide invalid and sickly children in that airless and over-crowded neighbourhood with a good meat-meal three times a week. The Lady Superintendent had only her own slender purse to draw upon, and the contributions of a few charitable volunteers; the house was small, and one little garret—formerly a workshop—was all the room that could be given up to the little people. Yet nevertheless, in the first year, very many guests were entertained there with such benefits as only doctors—several of whom attend these tiny patients gratuitously—can understand. 'The blood is the Life;' it is the meat that makes the blood; and in many cases the improvement in health wrought by this modest charity has been little short of a resurrection. Those who visit 'the Children's Dinner-table'—they dine at a most unfashionable hour, half-past twelve—do not of course see these convalescents; to get well is their sentence of banishment from this hospitable board; but they will see enough to convince them of the efficacy of the treatment.

Let us introduce you, readers, up the short flight of stairs, with a preliminary caution not to knock your heads against the low doorway, into the Banquet Hall. It looks like a carpenter's shop, scrupulously clean, but with nothing in it to speak of. There is a table on which the meat is carved, and a long low shelf on which the plates are arranged for the convenience of these

'Tiny Tims.' Through the window is seen a vista of squalid buildings; 'back-gardens' that are no gardens, wherefrom this July day the air comes laden with not one summer scent. Not a blade of grass is to be seen anywhere; not a sound is to be heard indicative of the fresh and joyous season. The roar of distant traffic, and the snarling of a hundred cats—the only creatures visible—are the musical accompaniments of the entertainment. The children come dropping in, their little feet toiling painfully up the stairs, by ones and twos. Some are too young—under four years old—to come alone; and almost all are late. Anything more sad than their appearance, though their eyes have a bright gleam in them because of the coming feast, it is impossible to imagine. To those who do not know what sickness means among poor folks, they would appear very ill indeed; but this is not so. Some, indeed, are scrofulous, some have hip-disease, some have abscesses—all, be it remembered, ailments requiring what doctors call 'constant support'; but all are capable of improvement.

The difference between the new-comers and those who are habitués of the Children's Table is very clearly marked. Each has a halfpenny in his or her hand, which he or she gives up to the Lady Superintendent, who finds that this nominal payment renders the benefit conferred more valued by the children's parents. Then they take their seats at a feast such as, except at No. 47 Earl Street, they never partake of save in dreams. The meat is excellent, with plenty of potatoes and gravy; and in summer-time they have always a little fruit. An allowance of half a pound of meat is provided for each; but while some consume that portion eagerly, others—the new-comers—are at first unable to cope with such abundance. As this is well understood beforehand, a portion of the joint always remains; and when the rest have done, the Superintendent gives the order: 'Send out for Somebody.' In Paris, the gentlemen who hold themselves ready to make up dinner-parties are called *quatorzièmes*, and form a comparatively small class. But in this neighbourhood of Earl Street, they are very numerous. It would remind one of the guests who were bidden from the highways to a certain marriage-feast; only in this case they are by no means 'compelled' to come in, but do so with great alacrity. Unlike many of their elders, who feast on rich fare, our little folks know when they have had enough, which they signify by turning round on their bench; and the way in which a very tiny guest will resent being turned round—under the misapprehension that his banquet is concluded—is an amusing spectacle. There is a little creature called 'The Footman,' aged five, an orphan waif of the neighbourhood, who 'waits,' and is himself an example of what continuous good feeding can effect in a child; his wholesome and plump appearance contrasts strangely with that of his less fortunate contemporaries, and forms an excellent advertisement of the Institution.

The good done by the humble charity, as any one may read in its Reports, is as great as the pleasure given, which is saying much indeed. Nor do the benefits it confers stop with this meal, though it is the chief one. Not only can tickets be purchased for sixpence each, or books containing ten for five shillings, to admit sick

children to these entertainments; but tickets for milk and eggs for those who are not equal to beef and mutton. No one who has seen them at their mid-day meal, would refuse his mite to feed these little ones. The faces of some of these invalids, softened by pain and timid from privation, are inexpressibly touching and tender.

Those who help them will be giving the best kind of help. The position of the little Institution is a sad one. Nothing is wasted, nothing save what is barely necessary is spent on 'working-expenses,' and it strives its best to keep going. But the neighbourhood is poor, and the existence of the Children's Dinner-table almost unknown. During the first year of its existence, it supplied seventeen hundred and forty-seven dinners; last year, through want of funds, only fifteen hundred and twenty-nine. Moreover, it has incurred a debt of fifty pounds; a small sum, but one which to this small charity is a heavy burden. Need we say more to those who have hearts and the means to remedy this state of things? It is no form of words to say that 'the smallest contribution will be thankfully received' by The Matron, 47 Earl Street, Lisson Grove, London, W.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE case of Electricity *versus* Gas continues to be waged with undiminished ardour on each side. Hitherto, we have had no really reliable data to go upon as to the cost of electric lighting; but now that that form of illumination has come into such extended use, trustworthy figures begin to show themselves. Professor Crookes, who knows a great deal more about electricity than most people, has, in a letter to the *Times*, detailed his experiences of the incandescent system, which for some months has been in use at his house in Kensington. The installation of the new light cost three hundred pounds. He uses a small Bingen dynamo machine, driven by a three and a half horse-power gas-engine. Through circumstances into which it is unnecessary here to enter, only two horse-power of this engine is available, so that the engine is not able to bring out the full power of the dynamo machine. The system comprises fifty lamps (not all in use at the same time), distributed to different parts of the house; and the cost per annum, as compared with gas, shows a balance in favour of electricity of four pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence. This estimate takes no account of the interest on the capital sunk; but Professor Crookes maintains that this, and the cost of wear and tear, also omitted, are more than counterbalanced by the absence of blackened ceilings, soiled curtains, tarnished gilding, unhealthy atmosphere, and all those minor evils which are commonly urged against the use of gas.

Mr Preece, the eminent electrician to the Post-office, has also done good service in pointing out and correcting the common mistake of

confounding the subdivision of the electric current with its distribution. A given current produced, say, by one horse-power may give an are-light equal to two thousand candles; but by no known means can this be so completely utilised, when subdivided, as to feed twenty lamps, each of one hundred candle-power. The best that has yet been done with one horse-power is to produce eight incandescent lights, each equal to sixteen candles, distributed as desired. As an example, he points to the largest machine yet made, that of Edison, which maintains twelve hundred incandescent sixteen-candle lamps with an expenditure of one hundred and fifty horse-power. The same power applied to the production of one stupendous are-light ought to give a light of many million candles. We therefore see that although the incandescent system in the hands of Edison, Swan, Maxim, and others offers at present the only feasible plan of house-to-house distribution, it is a most extravagant way of using the electric current.

The steamship *Labrador*, in a recent passage from Havre to New York, was, by means of Faure's accumulators, lighted by electricity during the whole of the voyage. The 'boxes of electricity' were charged by a dynamo machine on shore just before the vessel sailed; and although eight lights were kept continually in use, the supply of electricity was not exhausted at the end of the voyage. The lamps used were on the incandescent principle, and included those of Edison, Swan, and Maxim.

Captains Burton and Cameron, who accomplished a joint exploration of the gold-fields of West Africa, which only terminated a few months ago, recently gave an account of their experiences before the Society of Arts, London. They found gold in the black sand, in the washings from the hills, not far below the surface of the ground. In the streets of Axim, which must be considered as the chief outpost of this future California, gold spangles glittered after a shower. Gold is even yielded by the 'swish' which passes for mortar, cementing the walls of the houses; and gold-dust is collected by the native women from the sand of the sea-shore. In a word, the country seems to teem with the precious metal, only waiting for capital and labour to pick it up.

The French government have organised a meteorological expedition to Cape Horn, and the French Academy have urged the importance of appointing specialists to the mission for zoological, geological, and botanical researches. Special attention is to be given to the large mammalia, seals, sea-elephants, &c., which are rapidly disappearing; and many other orders of animal life are recommended by the Academy for study.

Some years ago, there was exhibited at South Kensington a number of paintings of plants and flowers, the work of Miss Marianne North, which at the time were greatly admired. Miss North has now presented this unique picture-gallery to the nation; and it finds an appropriate abiding-place in the Botanical Garden at Kew. Miss North is not only an accomplished artist, but an intrepid traveller, for all these pictures have been executed on the spots where the originals grew. And when we note that these spots seem to comprise

every country on the face of the globe, we cannot help feeling both astonishment and admiration at the courage and perseverance of the artist. Miss North is not a botanist in the technical sense of the term; but her drawings are so truthful, that in the opinion of those qualified to judge, they must ever remain a most valuable addition to a botanist's resources. Sir Joseph Hooker writes of these pictures: 'Many of the views here brought together represent vividly and truthfully scenes of astonishing interest and singularity, and objects that are among the wonders of the vegetable kingdom; and these, though now accessible to travellers and familiar to readers of travels, are already disappearing, or are doomed shortly to disappear before the axe and the forest fires, the plough and the flock, of the ever-advancing settler or colonist.' It will thus be seen that Miss North has done a great work in preserving the likeness of plants which in many cases are being pushed out of existence.

The study of optical phenomena would hardly seem to be profitable to one who has the misfortune to be blind; yet it is a fact that one of the most eminent of living authorities on optics, M. J. Plateau, of the Royal Academy of Belgium, has for the past forty years been totally blind. With the view of helping fellow-sufferers, he has lately written a pamphlet describing the curious sensations and experiences which his affliction brings before him; and his account of the spectral tints and lights and shades, which seem to appear before his darkened eyeballs, are specially interesting, and may possibly lead to some practical result. He traces his blindness to a habit which he in his younger days adopted, of looking steadfastly at the sun, in order to study the after-effects upon his eyes. It was several years later that he was smitten with blindness, but not before he had been subject to coloured appearances which seemed to form themselves round gas-flames, candles, &c. He alleges that Galileo records his experiences of similar halos, before blindness supervened in his case. M. Plateau therefore advises any one whose eyes give persistent coloured halos round light sources, to take warning, and at once to consult an oculist.

In the *Nineteenth Century* for May appears an anti-vaccination article by Mr P. A. Taylor, into which a curious error has crept. He gives the mean annual death-rate from smallpox for five years at more than four times the sum it ought to be. Dr W. B. Carpenter, the champion of vaccination, has examined the figures, and shows conclusively that they refer to measles instead of smallpox. Had the figures been correct, they would have formed a strong argument—as Mr Taylor intended they should—as to the impotence of vaccination. Corrected by Dr Carpenter, they go far to prove its efficacy; for they show that the actual mean for the five years in question is little more than half that of the lowest previous period.

Visitors to the Zoological Gardens are familiar with the ludicrous appearance of that long-beaked bird the Malay adjutant, which Mr Marks is so fond of introducing into his pictures. An interesting account of these curious birds appears in a series of notes by Lieutenant Kelham, published in a recent number of the *Ibis*. The two birds in question were kept as pets by the 74th

Highlanders when stationed at Penang in 1877. Although they were not kept in confinement, they never seemed inclined to stray far away from the camp, but would spend the greater part of their time standing opposite to one another, bill to bill, with outspread wings, never uttering a sound. After a time, one of the birds died, and the post-mortem examination—in which the living bird seemed to take the greatest interest—showed that the indigested leg of a fowl was the cause of death. The survivor banqueted on his friend's remains without compunction!

A new disease has been noted as occurring among workmen engaged in the manufacture of bichromate of potash, that brilliant red salt which is used for mahogany-staining and for many other purposes in the arts. The disease commences by a tickling sensation in the septum or partition of the nose which divides the nostrils; and although no actual pain is felt, and to the outward observer no change is seen, the partition is gradually but surely destroyed. No other part is affected, the lungs and throat even retaining their normal condition. At some works in Russia, fifty per cent. of the men proved on examination to be suffering from this new malady. The same salt is used largely in many photographic printing processes, and proves very poisonous to some people, who cannot with impunity touch a solution containing it.

By the government measure termed the Ancient Monuments Bill, certain ancient remains in the three kingdoms are selected for special attention. The owners of these may empower the Board of Works to become guardians, to cleanse, fence, repair, and do whatever is necessary to preserve the remains for all time. The Bill also confers upon the Commissioners of Works the power to purchase any ancient monument to which the measure applies, out of moneys which may from time to time be provided by parliament for that purpose. The Bill further provides an Inspector of ancient monuments, and imposes a penalty not exceeding five pounds, and damages for wilful injury. We wish that it were possible by Act of Parliament to prevent heedless people from cutting and scratching their names on public edifices and monuments. St Paul's Cathedral is a disgraceful example of this abominable practice. The various staircases and galleries leading to the top of the dome are defaced by the names of those who have thus tried to immortalise themselves. Even the trees in Epping Forest bear copious evidence of this nonsensical mania. Can nothing be done to stop it?

Mr Cecil N. Shadbolt has kindly forwarded to us a photograph which he took from the car of a balloon which started from the Alexandra Palace on Whit-Monday last. Mr Shadbolt has written a most interesting account of this, his first essay in aeronautics, which appears in the *British Journal of Photography*. The photograph is a success; but, as may be imagined, has far more the appearance of a map than of a picture; houses, railways, vehicles, and even people are distinguishable; but as the photograph was taken from an altitude of two thousand feet, the said people can be easily covered by the point of the finest needle. Mr Shadbolt has the credit of producing the first balloon-photograph in

which anything at all can be recognised, and although it is far from possessing the perfection which we look for in a picture taken on terra firma, it is, as we have said, a success.

Some balloon experiments have lately been tried in Germany with a new form of aerostat. Although filled with hydrogen, it will not of itself ascend, for its total weight is twenty-one pounds above that of the air which it displaces. A system of vanes actuated by machinery in the car causes the balloon to ascend, or to travel in any required direction. The motor, the nature of which is not stated, is said to weigh eighty pounds, and to give a force of four horse-power. The experiments were thoroughly successful; but—and there is a good deal in this 'but'—the weather was exceptionally calm.

'There is,' says *Iron*, 'a curious work of art in the grounds of the State-house at Columbia, South Carolina. It is an iron casting, commemorative of the soldiers, natives of that State, who died in the Secessionist War, whose names are inscribed on brass tablets at the base. The casting is a perfect imitation of the living palmetto, the favourite tree of South Carolina. The long, thin leaves of iron, lifelike, even to the hair-like fibres of the twigs and branches, wave tremulously in every breeze; and the whole tree, painted artistically, has so close a resemblance to the real tree as to deceive the acutest observer at the distance of five rods. In fact, the tree is a perfect success of the founder's art, and only those who have actually seen it are able to realise to what perfection that art may be brought.'

American Cheddar is the polite name for a mixture of skim-milk and lard, or skim-milk and oleo-margarine, which, according to the Secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, competent judges cannot distinguish from the cheese of which it is an imitation. The food is said to be perfectly wholesome so long as it is made from pure ingredients; but unfortunately, when adulteration creeps into a manufacture, it does not know when to stop. A slaughtered hog in America when found from disease to be unfit for bacon, is boiled down for lard, and it is too probable that such lard might find its way into the newly invented Cheddar. It is suggested that the manufacturer should be compelled to stamp the nature of the commodity 'artificial cheese,' so that buyers should at least know what they are purchasing. From America we are also promised imitation Siltton and other well-known English cheeses.

A lively controversy has been going on in the *Times* relative to the frozen meat which has lately reached the English market from New Zealand. Every one wishes to know what has become of it. A London butcher writes to say that the meat is no better than offal, and that the poor buy it for a few pence per pound. Another correspondent says that the carcases were eagerly bought up by some of the leading London butchers, whose names he could furnish if required to do so. An importer says that the meat costs him from threepence three-farthings to fourpence per pound, and that he gets from the London butchers fivepence-halfpenny to sixpence farthing per pound for it. We have no desire to sift these conflicting statements. Perhaps the most satisfactory letter of all is that

of one who states that the public will before long be able to decide upon the quality of this class of meat, as arrangements have been made for the direct disposal of future shipments.

Herr Schneider, of Berlin, is supplying horse-shoes of a new pattern, which are said to insure a firm footing upon modern asphalt. The prominences, or calks, are of india-rubber instead of metal, and are fixed in pockets in the malleable iron body of the shoe. The rubber wears out uniformly with the iron; but even if this should not be the case, the calks can easily be inserted by any unskilled hand. Provision is made for a special form of calk for slippery weather.

The Citizens' Sanitary Society of Brooklyn are carrying on a warfare against the use of the aiantus tree, which was introduced from China some years ago, and now shades many of the streets of Brooklyn and New York. Its rapidity of growth and its hardness soon won for it general approval; but it is now urged that the odour of its spring blossoms is unhealthy, causing prostration of the nervous system, swollen joints, and other ailments. The householders and medical men are therefore signing petitions for its removal.

A recent communication by M. Boizard to a French horticultural Society recommends the employment in hot-houses of the vapour of tobacco-juice for the destruction of insect pests. The mode of procedure is as follows: A small quantity of the juice is boiled for two hours, then water is added, and the mixture is boiled more briskly until it all disappears in the form of vapour. The tenderest plants are not injured by this treatment; but it should not be attempted on a hot day. The greater part of the insects fall to the ground; the rest die on the plants. Plants thus treated may be considered safe from the attacks of most insects for about six months.

Mr. Muybridge, the famous photographer of America whose 'trotting horse' and other studies of animals in motion have recently made so much stir in artistic circles, recently read a paper before the Society of Arts, London, in which he gave examples of the impossible attitudes given to animals by even the most experienced painters. He regretted that his efforts to get photographic records of the flight of birds had, from the extreme difficulties presented, been only partially successful. But he pointed out the curious circumstance that there were only two nations whose artists ever showed a bird's wings during flight in the downward position. These were the ancient Egyptians and the Japanese. He assumed that painters must be aware that a bird's wings take that position, but that they consider it inartistic so to draw them. We are inclined to think that this new photographic criterion of art may be carried too far. As we have before had occasion to remark, the camera is so much quicker in its appreciation of a moving object than the human eye, that it really has the power of recording attitudes which to us are practically invisible. We require artists to hold the mirror up to Nature as we see her, and not as a rapid gelatine plate observes her. Regarding this a contemporary writes: 'What seems unmistakably true to one expert, seems ludicrously false to another; but happily the world at large need

not greatly concern itself with the disputes. After all, a man's poor eyes are the best visual organs he possesses, and he must do what he can with them. If artists draw horses which convey to the spectator the notion that they are going at extreme speed; if the trot is so represented that it strikes the man who has carefully observed the trot as a truthful illustration of the pace, such drawings will be received and will give pleasure, though hundreds of photographers and scientific men should maintain that they were ridiculous.'

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

A NATURAL BALLROOM.

ABOUT a mile from the market-town of Adelsberg in Austria, and three miles from Trieste, is to be seen the most wonderful cavern in Europe, and possibly in the world, called the Adelsberg Cave, and which has been explored for a length of nearly three thousand yards, as far as a subterranean lake. This cavern consists of several grottos from sixty to eighty feet high. The interior resounds with the noise of water, as a little river runs completely through it, forming many cascades on its way, and being finally lost to view in a fissure. This river continues its subterranean course for about eight miles; and after a time, it disappears into the caverns of Laase, whence it emerges as a navigable river called the Laibach. The entrance to the cave of Adelsberg is illuminated by hundreds of candles, and a transparent curtain, composed of large sheets of crystallised limestone, is seen hanging from the roof. The vast hall or ballroom is about one hundred and eighty yards from the entrance. It is three hundred feet long, and one hundred feet high, and is adorned with transparent stalactites of every kind of fantastic shape and form. Until the year 1819, this ballroom was the only part known; but at this date, the wall of stalagmite was broken through, and a series of chambers exposed to view possessing a cathedral-like appearance, from the stalactites in many instances forming vast columns, by meeting the stalagmites below. In the Adelsberg Cavern, numerous specimens are found of the proteus, a kind of lizard that dwells in the bottom of cavern-lakes.

AUSTRALIAN BUSH-TRACKING.

'An extraordinary instance,' says the *Brisbane Courier*, 'of the powers of Australian bushmen in "tracking" is reported from Carcoar. On Monday morning last, 30th January, a Mrs Green, living at Mile-post Creek, in the Carcoar district, had occasion to go away to her neighbour's, leaving her child, aged two years and six months, in bed, believing it would not attempt to get up during her absence. In this Mrs Green was mistaken, for on her return the child could not be found; and the fact of its being clothed only in a little nightgown caused the parents more anxiety, especially as it was a fiercely hot day. A search was made by the neighbours, assisted by a man named Judd, noted as a clever tracker, who followed slowly on the infant's tracks (which were at times lost in the scrub) for about thirty

hours, when the little thing was found, safely quartered in a hollow log twelve miles from its home. The child was somewhat sunburnt, but otherwise quite well.'

THE CASTOR-OIL PLANT AS A FLY-DESTROYER.

We have long been accustomed (says a correspondent of *Land and Water*) to look upon the castor-oil plant as an ornament for our apartments; but I recently came across an article in *La Nature*, wherein M. Raffard, member of the Horticultural Society at Limoges, stated that a castor-oil plant, raised in a pot, placed in a room infested by flies, caused them to disappear as though by magic. On seeking to ascertain the cause, a large quantity of dead flies were found scattered around, whilst several others were stuck to the under part of the leaves. It appears that the leaves of the castor-oil plant exude an oil which is poisonous to all the insect tribe. It is not without interest to have it proved that the castor-oil plant, which is so ornamental, can resist the air of a *café* or other heated room where the temperature is so variable. As this plant grows very large, and is cultivated in almost all gardens, would it not be worth while to try a decoction of these leaves to destroy the blight and other insects which injure our plants and fruit-trees?

THE RUNNING-MAN TARGET.

Last year we took occasion to notice the invention and patenting, by Mr W. B. Blaikie, Edinburgh, of a running-man target for rifle-practice. The target, as then explained, is made of stout millboard, cut to represent a man, life-size, and painted to the fancy of the shooter. It is suspended from a wire, along which it runs; and can be worked by one man, who, while operating, is protected in the ordinary marking-butt or mantlet, and can signal the hits without leaving cover. The purpose which this target is meant to serve—namely, to test a rifleman's ability to hit a moving object—is a commendable one. To shoot at a fixed target, and to shoot at a moving figure, are very different things; and if our Rifle Volunteers are to be serviceable in the field, they must be able to do more than merely make 'points' at an object that never moves. To show how much practice is needed in shooting at some such moving object as the running-man target, we have only to instance what took place at this year's meeting of the Edinburgh and Mid-Lothian Rifle Association. There were competitions at the running-man target (life-size), moving at from four to eight miles an hour, and at two hundred yards' distance. The great proportion of the competitors were crack-shots; yet the following was the result: Out of eighty-four shots fired on the first day of the meeting, there were seven hits; on the second day, out of eighty-eight there were four hits, and out of a hundred, nine hits; on the third day, out of seventy-two shots, five hit; and on the fourth day, out of two hundred shots, eighteen hit. That is, out of five hundred and forty-four shots fired by otherwise competent marksmen, only forty-three in all—or eight per cent.—struck the 'running-man.' This seems to speak strongly for some more efficient means of rifle-practice than by fixed targets, being

adopted both for our Volunteers and the regular army.

WATER-SPECTACLES.

During this the bathing season, some of our readers may hear with interest of a recent invention calculated to enhance the pleasures of that healthy and agreeable pastime. Most practised swimmers vary their watery evolutions by an occasional dive; in these descents, however, all attempts to discern objects generally result in little more than a vague vision of shimmering patches of light and colour. This indistinct perception is caused of course by the very different refractive power of water from that of air—the medium to which the complicated and delicate apparatus of our eyes is adapted. To restore, then, distinct sight to the immersed eye, such a lens is needed as will compensate for the difference in refractive power between air and water, and cause the focus of rays of light, reflected from visible objects to our eye, to fall flush upon the retina, as is the case when we are in our normal element, instead of falling beyond it, as occurs when the eye is submerged. Such a lens has been devised by Dr Dudgeon; and diving-spectacles fitted with a pair of such glasses are manufactured by a London optician, Mr Adie of Pall Mall.

EVENTIDE.

Tired of its own bright charms, the golden Day
Rests in the arms of Evening; all is still;
Nor leaf, nor flower moves, lest the spell might break
Which holds the Earth bound fast in twilight chains.
From yonder hawthorn tree, some leaf-hid bird
Breathes to the dying day a soft farewell,
That, mingling with the stillness, seems to weave
Into the silence threads of melody.
Wild roses, since the dawn, have deeply blushed
Beneath the Sun's warm kisses; now at Eve
Faint odours, passing sweet, possess the air—
Rich incense offered to the Queen of Night!
For lo! a silvery light falls all around,
As up the violet heavens a pale young moon
Climbs high, and higher still.

A low-voiced breeze,
Rising with balmy sigh amid the hills,
Comes ling'ringly adown the rocky glen,
Floats o'er the uplands, kisses every flower,
And whispers that the fair, sweet Day is dead!
Now restful thoughts and calm enter the heart,
And soothe the tired brain; as from on High
A blessing falls on everything below:
Cool shades to Evening—rest and peace to Man.

AGNES M. MACONACHIE.

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GOLD.

WE understand better than the ancients the cause of what has been aptly termed, the hunger for gold. It is not a mere lust for wealth, a passionate avarice, a heartless selfishness that makes mankind seek the royal metal wherever it may be—a metal which alone furnishes a basis by which the transactions of international commerce can be carried on. As the frontiers of trade invade the savage parts of the earth, all local standards of value are discarded in favour of gold. Cattle, cloth, shells, and other things, useful or conventional, lose their exchange utilities; and a time is coming when gold will be the universal intermediary. The consequence will be a general levelling of values all over the world, and that means that the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour will be assured to every toiler. Thenceforward, no savage will dispose of the products of his native land for beads, bits of glass, rum-bottles, or Birmingham-made idols. Between him and the trader's greed, gold will mediate. In Britain, during the abundant supply of the metal, it has banished the truck-system, and brought master and man into truer financial relationship.

The history of modern commerce is the history of gold-discovery. Looking through the four centuries that have elapsed since Columbus revealed a New World to the Old, we see how much gold had to do with the exploration and settlement of the West. It was owing to the mass of precious metal poured into Europe by the Spaniards from the plunder of Mexico and Peru, that the commerce of the sixteenth century sprang forward more than it had done in all preceding time. A hope to obtain gold in fabulous quantity led to the immense emigrations from East to West. No other lure could have induced men to undergo the perils of the menacing Atlantic, which had held the boldest at bay. The desire for American gold, like another Crusade, blended many races into a mighty host, and broke down many insular barriers for ever.

In a wonderfully short time, considering the strange character of the adventurers and the smallness of their ships, much of the New World was explored by the searchers for the Eldorado. If they failed to find that wonder-land, other marvels were achieved. New nations were added to the human family, invaluable productions were added to the stores of trade, and the huge Pacific Ocean to the water-ways of commerce. Geography became a science.

The business of Europe was phenomenally vitalised by Spanish-American gold. It quickly found its way to the real centres of trade in Italy and Holland, leaving Spain as fast as it entered. For gold then, as now, gravitated to those who knew best how to use it. By rapine and fraud, the mild natives of Mexico and Peru had been dispossessed, and their spoilers fell under the ban which blights ill-gotten wealth. Wherever there was commercial ability in Europe, the new gold and the new domains of trade were taken advantage of. England felt the impulse of the time perhaps more than other countries; but every one, even the most barbarous, was precipitated upon that mercantile path which all pursue to-day.

After the supply of American gold had diminished, Africa was sedulously explored, and the Gold Coast furnished the Dutch, Portuguese, French, and English with what sufficed to keep up the accelerating movements of commerce that went on through the seventeenth century. India, China, and other parts of the Eastern world contributed; but the demand was never appeased. In the eighteenth century, as the British dominion began to supersede native rule in India, large quantities of gold found their way westward; with the result of expanding trade both foreign and domestic.

But owing to ignorance of the real part gold plays in commerce, the development of international trade was retarded, and at times suspended by the follies and crimes of merchants, and by the policy of governments. Commercial wars and national prejudices retarded the progress

of business, and perpetuated the savagery of human nature. Men had to learn by painful errors that gold is the machinery of trade, nothing more. To get it and keep it in the country was the object of nations; to get it and hoard it, the object of individuals. Only a few scientific men understood that all trade, whether internal or external, was simply a bartering of commodities or an exchange of services; the vast majority believed that gold was all in all. Hence it was sought for everywhere, and some of the greatest *savants* devoted life and knowledge to the search for a chemical agent which should convert the baser metals into gold. As the light of to-day's effulgent science falls upon the blunders of philosophers and upon the errors of economists, we are amazed that men could have been so misled as to the true way to wealth. Yet, coming generations, judging us by a still more potent science, may also be astonished at our errors. Barbarous policies still divide the foremost nations from each other, and forbid that fraternal reciprocity of service upon which human happiness and progress wholly depend.

The acceptance of gold as a common medium furnished mankind with an instrument of illimitable potency, and one that was indispensable for the solidarity of nations. Political economy had to discover its relationship with commerce, and some fundamental truths were arrived at by the close of the eighteenth century. How they were applied in knocking off the fetters of commerce, is well known. Our present object, however, is to note the consequences of the great gold-findings, which took place when the value of gold was better understood. Steam-industry and locomotion were among the factors of trade when the Californian discoveries sent a thrill of excitement throughout the world; and the electric telegraph just starting to girdle the earth, spread the glad tidings that the true Eldorado was found at last. The new gold multiplied railways everywhere; mechanical industry supplanted hand-work in every department of activity, and all the concrete sciences and useful arts were greatly improved. Each became prolific causes of material and intellectual wealth. Vast multitudes went to California from every state in America and Europe; and an immense sutler-host followed the army of gold-diggers, to supply its wants and its whims. This large draught upon labour facilitated the transformation of industry from its individual methods to the associated system. Lancashire and Yorkshire no longer rebelled against steam-power and factory organisation. Californian gold bridged over the terrible chasm which had threatened to engulf thousands of cotton and woollen operatives in an abyss of hunger. A hundred new employments absorbed the people whom steam had dismissed from their wonted occupations, to re-engage them in other and better ones. The inventive spirit of the time was not less manifested at the gold-fields than in the domain of industry. Mining was immensely facilitated by the machines and contrivances which came to help the gold-getter to liberate the metal from its rocky matrix and to wash it from its hiding-place. Moreover, geology stepped in and explained the mystery of auriferous deposits, and saved mankind from a vast waste of time and money.

Just as Europe had shot forward meteor-like in the sixteenth century, by the impulse it received from American gold, so in the nineteenth century, another and infinitely greater movement followed the discovery of Western treasure. A reverberation of activity, of speculation, of adventure thundered into the remotest villages, and aroused the supinest to fevered expectation. Ranks and classes began to assume new attitudes to each other; social rigidities gave place to unhopd-for elasticities; external events settled internal disputes; emigration liberated energies from dangerous restraints at home to beneficent activities abroad.

While Californian gold-finding was electrifying mankind, astounding reports came from Australia of auriferous deposits unparalleled by all previous discoveries. The precious metal was said to be picked up in boulder-like masses upon the surface of the ground. When nuggets of incredible weight were shipped to England, and gold markets quaked with apprehension of a deluge that would utterly subvert all values, such a furor set in as had never perhaps been known in the world before. A gold-fever pervaded civilisation. The 'finds' in California had prepared men for almost anything; but this preternatural quantity of gold lying in the mysterious solitudes of the 'newest world,' made the placers and the mines of America seem insignificant. A frenzy to possess the fascinating metal waiting for owners seized upon multitudes of every order of mind, and almost every grade of society sent representatives to the Australian diggings. The strong, the weak, the poor, the rich, the learned, the illiterate jostled in a mighty stampede to the Southern Eldorado. But speedily they were differentiated into ranks and conditions, that few had dreamed of when starting on the common quest. Civilisation shaped their ends in spite of themselves. Extraordinary metamorphoses took place. Gold-getting was an art that only some could prosecute. More than *desire* was needed to win the metal from its recesses. The idle, the incompetent, the unstable, the vagrant, failed in the gold-fields, as they had failed in other fields at home. The head-learned became subordinate to the hand-learned. University-men became the cooks and washermen of navvies and sailors who tracked the ore to its home. Young curates took to a pastoral life of another kind than they had known in Britain, and tended sheep on the Plains. Cockney roughs, who had disturbed the peace of their native Metropolis, maintained order in the antipodeal mobs. Country bumpkins were transformed into colonial magnates, wandering pedlars became merchants and bankers. Convicts rose from ignominy and despair to honour and wealth. Such a terrific sifting was never seen previously, as went on in Australia during the rushes from one gold-field to another, and while the social edifice was being sketched. The fate of millions was profoundly changed, not only in Australia, but at home. So great a commingling of men and ideas had never occurred before. California had interfused many tribes, kindreds, and tongues; but things went on in Australia on a larger scale and with greater rapidity.

Great as were the social consequences of gold-finding in Australia itself, they were still greater in England and Europe, as the golden river poured

into the channels of trade. The last vestiges of feudalism tottered to their fall; and associated industry spread into every country. Joint-stock Companies began to supersede individuals in commerce; for the wealth of the world was now in many hands. Wages rose, and the hours of labour fell universally. The education of the masses of the people was also thereby rendered more than hitherto possible. A new and remarkable confidence in the future began to affect mankind. Heretofore, the Golden Age had been placed in the irrecoverable past, and men had accepted the doleful belief that an inevitable degeneracy was the fate of humanity. With the new gold and the innumerable instruments of wealth it created, a new faith in the brilliant destiny of posterity arose. The deductions of science warranting this were eagerly caught up. Theories and speculations that would have been rejected with contempt twenty years before, found ready acceptance.

For thirty years this time lasted, and then the golden harvest shrank into smaller and smaller crops, men's hopes falling proportionately. Gold was still got in California and Australia, and new fields in New Zealand had been discovered. But the yield was not encouraging; the fever was over. The demands of commerce were infinite; for it had dilated to the extremities of the planet. Moreover, the influx of gold had affected the monetary equilibrium of the world, compelling all states to make it their standard, while the wear and tear of coin was vastly greater than in earlier times, from the rapidity of circulation. Gold, like other substances, perishes in use. Tough and coherent as it is, the transfer from hand to hand and from pocket to pocket grinds it into impalpable dust, which is withdrawn from man's service for ever. Nevertheless, though some may talk of a gold-famine, we may be on the eve of a gold-supply far more abundant than any previous ones.

Recently, Captain Burton, the celebrated traveller, has reported that almost illimitable gold can be obtained at the Gold Coast, Africa, a district which has been auriferously prolific for centuries. He says the region is equal to half a dozen Californias, a statement that might be doubted if made by a less capable authority. The testimony of the great traveller is supported by another illustrious discoverer, Commander Cameron, who visited and investigated the Gold Coast along with Captain Burton. Gold is found in the sea-sand, in the dust of the roads, and in the mud walls of native huts. Several mining Companies are engaged in gold-finding in the district, and they testify to the great possibilities it affords. A subject of such importance has of course been widely discussed by experts in England; and by this time large numbers of prospectors are doubtless verifying matters on the spot.

There are many difficulties in Africa that did not confront the gold-diggers of California and Australia. The climate has its dangers; the inhabitants are savages; the rulers, suspicious and hostile to strangers. But where abundant gold is to be got with ease, white men will go; and the capital of civilisation will flow thither, bearing ten thousand energies to confront those of nature and barbarism. The want of gold is

so great, that the world must have it at any risk; and were it guarded by all the savages of Africa united into a single host, it would become the possession of commerce. When geologists and specialists have pronounced a favourable opinion, and diggers have proof positive that a great gold deposit remains to be worked, the difficulties with natives will soon be solved. Medical science can mitigate the evils of the worst climate. During the thirty years of great gold-discovery, the art of mining and washing for the metal has made more progress than in all antecedent time. Everything favours a speedy translation of African gold into the channels of international trade, should it be found in the quantities alleged by Captain Burton.

But beside enlarging the possibilities of external civilisation, African gold would introduce an enduring civilisation into Africa itself, in those equatorial regions that have hitherto remained barbaric. California and Australia have given their auriferous treasures to the world, and in return have received a far greater enrichment in agricultural, pastoral, and mechanical wealth. Metallic deserts have been changed into industrial empires, that will enrich man for all coming time. So, in equatorial Africa, when gold has disappeared, civilisation will remain. Who can say what commercial future awaits the inhabitants of the Dark Continent, when once they are affiliated with the rest of the human family in the bonds of trade?

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XXX.—SHORN OF WEALTH AND SHORN OF ALL.

THE strong spring sunshine lay, at random broadcast, on sea and shore, and the great spring wind came roaring like the voice of a lusty giant. There was scarce a cloud in the sky, and scarce a cloud in happy Gerard's mind. Stout Roland, feeling the spring in his veins, caracoled hither and thither with arched neck and mincing feet; and Gerard felt all the horse's joy, and in the pauses of the ride lifted up his voice and sang for gladness, at the eager wind and the wide sunshine and the hope of half an hour hence. He was riding to see Constance, and that of itself was enough; and besides, Gerard was one of those men to whom riding is the most delightful of all physical pleasures. So, with Roland curveting and prancing and making a mighty pretence of scorn at all things—with a tender measured fineness in every motion the while—Gerard came up to the lodge-gates of the Grange, and called for the lodge-keeper with a voice of jollity. Out she came, shading her eyes from the bright light, an old woman, who had kept the lodge for the old family.

'They be all gone to town, Muster Lumby,' said the old woman.

'Gone to town?' repeated Gerard in a voice of disbelief.

'Yes, sir,' said the old lady, 'all the fambly.'

Gerard sat without reply for one dismal minute, and then turned away.

A happy lover, who has come
To look on her that loves him well,
Who lights and rings the gateway bell,
And learns her gone and far from home.

He saddens; all the magic light
Dies off at once from bow and hall,
And all the place is dark, and all
The chambers emptied of delight.

He hung his head on the way back. There was no pleasure in the keen wind and bright sunshine on the homeward ride. Home reached, he found a note, just delivered by one of the Grange servants. It came from Constance, and ran thus:

DEAR GERARD—My father and Reginald are both going to town, and since I cannot be left in this great house alone, I am to go with them, and be taken to my Aunt Lucretia's. You will not forget to write to me. We shall be away for at least a week.—Yours truly, CONSTANCE.

The note was cool enough, but all Constance's missives had been cool, and so Gerard felt the absence of no accustomed warmth. Yet none the less the brief iciness chilled him, and he was puzzled by the command to write, and by the absence of an address to write to. This was the first he had heard of Aunt Lucretia, and he knew no more of her whereabouts than the note told him. He had a reticence about writing to Constance through her father, whose address he knew; and he felt, with a proud sense of undeserved injury, that if she had of purpose aforethought omitted her address, he would wait until she sent it to him. The bright spring hours began to go heavily. Val Strange had mysteriously disappeared, and Gerard was lonely and altogether ill at ease, until on Thursday morning came a telegram from the offices of the firm, under the hand of Mr Barnes: 'Please come to town by first train. Make no delay.'

'Your father has been away four days, Gerard,' said Mrs Lumby, 'and has never written me a line. That is very unusual, and it makes me a little anxious. You must tell him to write at once.'

The call to town revived Gerard's spirits. He was going to have a fortune put into his hands, and that meant freedom to marry so soon as Constance could be persuaded.

'All right, mother,' he answered lightly, kissing her. 'I won't forget.—Good-bye, Milly. Get ready,' he added with a compound smile, in which a most hangdog aspect blended comically with a beaming joyousness—'get ready for your orange blossoms.' Milly nodded gaily from the hall; the young fellow got into the dogcart beside the groom, and waving his hand, drove away. Pleasant thoughts were with him on his journey, and his spirits seemed to leap the higher for their late depression, as a branch released swings upward. His little bitterness about Constance was all dispelled; and as he rode through London streets towards the offices, he whistled like the mavis. Looks are not easy to define, or Gerard might have read pity in the face of the very porter at the doors, and

pity again in the face of elderly Johnson at his desk.

'Good-morning, Johnson,' said Gerard cheerily. 'Is my father here?'

'No, sir,' said the old clerk. 'Mr Lionel and Mr George are up-stairs.'

Mr Lionel and Mr George were the junior partners, Gerard's cousins. There was a marked sadness on the old man's brow, and a melancholy quaver in his voice.

'How glum you Londoners are, Johnson,' said the young fellow. 'Why, if you meet a ploughman in the country, you hear him whistling—out of tune most likely, but still whistling. They catch the habit from the birds, perhaps. But all you people look as if you were assisting at a funeral.'

'This way, sir,' said Johnson. 'Allow me.' He led the way up-stairs, turning half round to Gerard with a respectful bend. In the room which had been Garling's, sat Mr Barnes and the junior partners.

'Good-day, George,' said Gerard cheerily.—'Good-day, Lionel.—How d'ye do, Barnes? All here to help me into El Dorado, I suppose.—Where's the governor?'

The cousins shook hands with him solemnly, and Barnes bowed with saddened visage.

'Well, upon my word,' said Gerard, looking from one to the other, 'you're a cheerful lot, to be sure!' As he looked, his own face caught something of the shadow which lay on theirs.

'Sit down,' said his cousin Lionel. 'We are in trouble here.—Mr Barnes, tell him all you know.'

'First of all,' said Gerard, anxiously looking from one to another, 'where is my father?'

'At his hotel,' said Cousin George. 'He is not well; in fact, he is seriously unwell; but don't be afraid for him. Sit down.—Tell what you know, Barnes.'

At that, Barnes told all he knew, as we know it already; and Gerard listened amazed, almost beyond amazement.

In the course of the evening, pursued Barnes, 'I met Mr Lionel and Mr George. They had heard of the unfortunate circumstance of the cheque, and I gave them your father's assurance that everything would be right to-day. We were all naturally anxious, and we arranged to meet here at nine o'clock this morning—an hour earlier than usual. Mr Lionel and Mr George will tell you that they called at your father's hotel and could hear no news of him.'

'I called,' said Lionel, breaking in gravely, 'at Garling's place, to see if he knew anything. They told me he was away—the people at the shop beneath the rooms he lived in—he had gone away with a lady on Tuesday night.'

'With a lady?' cried Gerard.

'A young lady,' returned Cousin Lionel. 'He had taken an extra room for her some days before, and spoke of her as his daughter. She called him her father; and their joint story was credited.'

Gerard sank back in his chair, feeling like a man in a nightmare.

Barnes went on with his story, from which it appeared that the three reaching the offices at the appointed hour, found the night-porter and his wife in a terrible flutter of alarm and

excitement, having two hours before discovered the head of the firm insensible upon the floor of that room.

'It was probably providential,' said Barnes in conclusion, 'that in falling, he had slightly wounded himself and had lost a little blood. I am bound to say that the watchman and his wife seem to have acted with great promptitude. The man ran at once for a surgeon. Your father was removed to his hotel; a physician was sent for, and everything that skill could suggest had been done before our arrival.'

Gerard saw despair confronting him, and but an hour ago he had been so happy!

'We have done what we could here,' said George Lumby, rising and folding his arms across a burly chest. 'We have turned over the whole of our private balances to the credit of the firm. That is but a drop in the ocean,' he added sorrowfully; 'but'—lifting his head and striding across the room—'it may help us after all.'

'We conjecture,' said Lionel, 'that your father knows something we do not know, and we think that if we can tide over a day or two, he may save us. George and I have given instructions to realise on all stock we hold, and we may make a stand. But the cheque yesterday, and Garling's flight, and your father's sudden illness, have an ugly look. We are talked about everywhere, and we expect to be pressed. The small-fry have been at us already, and have been paid. We shall stand out as long as we can.'

The very prosperity of the firm had led the partners to their ruin. It had been so profitable to pour their profits anew into that great reservoir, that they had invested but little outside it, and now the treasures of the reservoir had sunk, as into some great subterranean cavern.

All day the ominous City talk went on, and men spoke of the great House as doomed. It was believed that Garling had got away with prodigious sums, and so his pre-eminence amongst keen fellows remained undisputed still. There were some adventurous spirits who were willing to take long odds against the breakage of the firm; and sportive clerks offered the market betting on the event, as if it had been a sort of City Derby. Once that day the firm was hit hard; and the junior partners took up a great bill of which, until then, they had known nothing, and waited with what stoicism they had for the next blow to fall. Gerard, feeling as if his heart had been one great ache, sat down and wrote a letter to his mother, disguising from her the ills that had befallen, and striving to write lightly, whilst his heart sank over every word like lead. 'Do not expect to hear from either of us for a day or two,' he wrote, 'for we are most prodigiously busy, and have no news which you unbusiness-like country-people would care to hear.'

Mrs Lumby reading this next day, took it for a jocular affectation of the cares of commerce worn for her amusement by the new partner, and she and Milly had a laugh over it. But a day or two actually going by, and she hearing no more, she wired a message of inquiry to the offices.

'You must answer it,' said George Lumby, who took it down to the hotel to Gerard. 'She

will be up here, otherwise.—How is he?' nodding at the door of the sick-room. Gerard had taken the dressing-room outside the chamber in which his father lay, and stayed there day and night.

'He knows nobody,' said Gerard sadly. 'Smiles at his fingers like a child, when he awakes.'

'Have you spoken to him?'

'Yes. He knows nobody. The doctor says he is out of danger, bodily.'

'He fears for his mind? Permanently?'

'I am afraid so,' answered Gerard with a dreary sigh.

'We may go at any hour,' said George gloomily—'at any hour.'—Gerard answered only by another sigh.—'We are all in the same boat, Gerard. Wire to your mother, and tell her not to be alarmed, and then write to-night.'

'Yes, yes,' answered Gerard; and his cousin went sadly away again. At that moment the door was rapped by a waiter, who brought in letters for Gerard, re-directed and sent on from the Hall by Milly. He looked at them absently, and seeing that one came from Constance, he opened it and read it. She wrote as coolly as ever, but bade him come to see her if he should come to town, and gave her address this time. Icily brief as it was, the note would have made him happy a day or two before; and now, having read it, he laid it to his breast with a great sob, and hung his head, as if to hide from the mere daylight the blinding tears in his eyes. But recovering himself after a while, he answered his mother's message, and afterwards sat down and wrote her a cheerful letter, asking her to come to London, and telling her that his father had been unwell, but was recovering now. 'She will think it a slight matter,' he thought; 'and why should she be troubled, poor soul, before her time? She will be troubled enough, when she knows.'

When she came next day with Milly, she found her husband sitting up in bed, with a pinched and vacant look upon his face. He knew nobody, but smiled at her—an awful smile—and talked disjointedly of things that had happened years ago. Then Gerard discovered that his kindly meant deceit was cruel; for the shock well-nigh cost his mother her wits, and for an hour or two she was pale and helpless and as cold as marble. But a great fit of crying coming to her aid, she recovered herself, and sat down beside her husband's bed; and she and Milly watched there to the exclusion of all others but Gerard and the doctors. They told her nothing of the affairs of the House, thinking one trouble enough at a time. Gerard sent no word to Constance, but waited like a man condemned until the last stroke should fall. It fell on Tuesday, a week and a day after the elder Lumby's arrival in town. The two junior partners came together in the dusk of the afternoon, and he saw the doom of the House in their faces.

'It is all over,' said the elder of the two in a commonplace voice.

'Yes,' said the other. 'We closed the doors at half-past two. We heard it cried by the news-boys in the streets as we came here.'

Gerard took up his hat and made as if to leave the room; but there was such a look upon his face, that the two cousins, exchanging a swift glance, stepped between him and the door, and

each laid a friendly hand upon him. 'Where are you going, Gerard?' asked George.

He looked at them, first at one and then at the other, and reading their fear, shook his head, and tried to smile. 'I am going to see my sweet-heart,' said the simple Gerard, choking down a sob. 'I must tell her what has happened, and say good-bye. She can't marry a pauper; and I don't want her to learn the news from the papers. I shan't be long away. You can keep it from my mother for a time. She has enough to bear.'

'They know it in the hotel,' said George. 'The very waiters know it. We are all in the same boat, Gerard.'

They shook hands sadly, as men before now have shaken hands in shipwreck, waiting for the shock and the plunge; and Gerard passed into the streets, and walked, deep beneath the waters of despair. How he reached the little house in Chesterfield Street, he never knew; but he stood at last before the door, and asked quietly for Miss Jolly; and sent in his card and waited. To the day of his death, he will not forget that waiting. It seemed long, long before the little parlour-maid returned and marshalled him upstairs and into Constance's presence. She came with a languid grace to meet him, and held out her hand; but at the sight of his face, paused, and looked at him with greating eyes.

'I have come to say good-bye,' he said. His heart was like ice in his breast.

'Good-bye?' she answered. 'Gerard! What do you mean?' She fancied she read something like a threat in his manner. Looks are hard to read, and the reader is likely to see himself reflected in their characters. She was fresh from thinking of Val Strange. Of what was Gerard thinking?

'Yes,' he answered; 'I am here to say good-bye. You can't marry a pauper.' His voice was strained and harsh, and he spoke with difficulty. 'The House has failed. I have come to tell you so, and to give you back your freedom.'

'The House has failed? The firm?'

'The firm of Lumby and Lumby is bankrupt,' he responded. 'I won't detain you,' he added helplessly, not knowing what words found their way to his lips. 'Good-bye!' With that he turned, and suddenly flung both arms abroad with the ultimate gesture of despair, and dropped them, heavily, at his sides. What could she say? What comfort could she offer? What consolation could reach him? 'Work and hope, and I will wait.' Ah, she was not free to say that. She might have said it to the man she loved, and have dared her father's opposition, and poverty, and the cankering cares of waiting years, as many a maid had done before her for a true man's sake. But she had no such balm for Gerard, who being shorn of wealth, was shorn of all.

Perhaps in some inmost corner of his heart he waited for some command which should give him life again. Perhaps, at the sight of his despair, she half wished that she could give it. She touched him timidly on the sleeve, awed by the silence of his grief, for she knew that he had loved her well, and she guessed at something of his miseries. At that touch he turned, and for one passionate moment held her in his arms;

then, with a cry like that of some wild creature in extreme pain, he released her, and rushed from the room and from the house.

* * * *

Constance, thus left alone, was filled with many struggling emotions, amongst which it would not have been easy for any philosopher to discern the uppermost. Gerard had half frightened her by the wildness of his farewell; and she would have been less than woman had she been unmelted by his grief. His trouble, as it referred to her, naturally touched her less than did the loss of his fortune. 'Me?' she thought (and not unwisely, for she judged from what she knew), 'he will grieve because he has lost me, perhaps for a month or two; but he will feel the loss of his fortune all his life.' She could not, struggle as she might, disguise from herself the fact that she was pleased to be free. She had never greatly cared for him. Since that first day when the warmth of his ardour had a little touched her heart, he had never raised a thrill in her. And since then, Val Strange had risen on the horizon of her life, and in spite of herself, she had glided into such a love for him as she never guessed or dreamed before. Yes; she was sorry for Gerard, but she was pleased to be free. And yet, Val had gone away; resolutely bent on curing himself, and to that end had set an inexorable distance between himself and her, and might stay away for years. Why, since it was to come, could not Gerard's misfortune have come a week sooner? She hated herself for that cruel thought; but it was there, and she could not drive it from her. Poor Gerard! She respected him greatly, and liked him, coldly; and if she had been an empress with gifts to give, she would have given him a new fortune, and have taken joy in the gift. She could scarcely have been sorrier for his loss if he had been her brother. But he had many friends, and amongst them Gerard would do very well. Anything like the bitterness of downright poverty was of course impossible for him. He could never come to that.

Gerard pacing lonely in the gas-lit streets, gave the lost fortune little thought. There was grief enough for him in his mother's grief, in his father's helplessness, in his own loss of love, and hope of love. He had always been so used to money, that the prospect of poverty could take no hold upon him. Only those who have felt the gripe of poverty know so much as how to dread it. In the midst of his afflictions, poverty seemed likely to be the lightest, and it was certainly the only one amongst them which a heart at once sound and gentle could at first sight scorn. It was burned into him that he had come away without one word of farewell from Constance. That seemed hard. But she had never made any great pretence at caring for him, and his thoughts began to be bitter. Yet poor Gerard was too simply noble to hold that mood long, and by-and-by he began to defend her, and to yearn over her, and to pray that whatever came to him, she might be happy. He even tried to take pleasure in the belief that she had not loved him, on the ground that she would not grieve at his leaving her; but at that his sorely-tried heart rebelled. He would like her to feel some grief at that—a little.

Some thirty years ago, the Sage of Chelsea

preached one dogma, worded thus—'By all means, at all times consume your own smoke.' For the carriage of this dogma into practical every-day working, Gerard was peculiarly fitted. He said nothing of his personal griefs to any man or woman. He avoided all mention of them to his mother even, and resolutely and heroically fought them down. But the conflict wore him thin and pale; and in the midst of all their distresses, Milly and his mother had no keener grief than this of Gerard's. The days went on, the great bankruptcy was noised abroad, and other lesser bankruptcies followed it in due course. Gerard's vast fraud widened and broadened in its consequences, as great crimes will; and people who had never heard of him, and never did hear of him, went hungry because of him. The properties of the firm were sold at auction; the very desk at which old Johnson had sat these fifty years was knocked down to the highest bidder before the veteran's sorrowing eyes; the very ledgers went for waste paper, all but the latest; the premises themselves were sold, realising a price so vast that creditors reading it grew easier in their minds; the senior partner's private properties were impounded with the rest, stocks and shares and balance at the banker's; and Lumby Hall was in the market.

Then it came out, when the panic was over, that there was enough for everybody, even the lawyers, and that there was a little to be saved after all. But in the middle of the distresses, and in this pale gleam of joy which followed them, the head of the great wrecked House of Lumby and Lumby sat like a child, with no more than a child's joys and a child's sorrows, smiling at the sunlight playing on his wall, or whimpering to be lonely in the dusk. His memory was a ruin. He knew nobody.

CANCALE AND ITS FISHERIES.

CANCALE is the name of a commune or parish situated in the department of Ille-et-Vilaine, a division of the ancient French province of Brittany. By the same cognomen are also known a small but deep bay within the larger one of Mont St-Michel, and a village standing on the summit of very high cliffs, a mile or so from the sea. But the long row of houses and cottages, the pretentious hotel, the wine and other shops built upon a narrow slip of land just above high-water mark, which tourists visit, and assume to be Cancale, is only the fishing-port of La Houle (Anglicè, 'The Surf'); and if the said tourists have been there when a strong north-wester is blowing, and have seen the waves dashing and foaming upon the shore, they will be satisfied that the place deserves its appellation. The bay along which La Houle stretches is nearly a crescent; one arm—its eastern—reaching towards Mont Dol; the other—its northern—jutting into the sea. This last bears so close a resemblance to the snout of a pig, that it has been called from time immemorial *Le Grouin de Cancale*—*grouin* being the French for the nozzle portion of porcine organisation. The bottom of the sea between the two headlands just mentioned, and indeed somewhat beyond them, is thickly covered with a sort of ooze, highly favourable to the production and habits

of the oyster, for which Cancale and its neighbourhood have been long celebrated. But as dredged some little distance from land, and brought and deposited nearer in-shore on what are called *parcs*—beds of mud and stones—the mollusc obtains no other food than that supplied from salt water, and although it grows under the diet, yet it acquires a strong briny taste, not agreeable to the majority of French epicurean consumers. To remedy this, the following plan is adopted. The oyster is taken while young from the *parcs* hereabouts, and sent to other localities where natural springs of soft water mix with the salt; and surprising effects result under the advantages of procuring sustenance from the elements of both fluids. Thus, at Marennes, near La Rochelle—one of the *parcs* of this nature—the Cancale oyster loses its bitter saline taste, increases enormously in size and thickness, and becomes that dark-green colour which is so repulsive to Englishmen, who are accustomed to white or pearly natives, though highly appreciated by Gallic gourmands.

The fishing-fleet of Cancale, both for dredging oysters and catching fish, numbers more than two hundred lugger-rigged craft of small tonnage. These boats are owned partly by single individuals, partly by their crews, who have clubbed together for co-partnership. Their tackle and gear cost as much as the boats and sails; the nets—which are chiefly made at Nantes—being the great item of expense. The seine is never used; the trawl, which is fitted with a huge head-bag or receptacle, being the sort of snare generally adopted. Each boat has a functionary called 'a mistress'; that is, a woman who has contracted, under certain conditions, for the sale of the take of the craft. This crew have therefore nothing to do with the disposal of the fish. The produce of the sale effected by the 'mistress' is generally divided into five parts—two to the owner or owners of the boat, one to her skipper, and two to the crew, the woman having previously deducted her legitimate profits.

The life of a 'Cancalais,' as these fishermen dub themselves, is one even more rife with danger than that of others of their calling. The bay of Mont St-Michel is one of the most perilous seas in the world. Equinoctial tides rise in it to the height of fifty feet, and ordinary tides to thirty-five feet. The distance between high and low water marks is more than six miles in some places; and the rapidity of the currents, especially on a stormy day, maelstrom-like. Quicksands, too, are numerous, and a boat shoaled on one of them during ebb-tide, has little chance of its crew being saved; as regards itself, none. In calm weather, the boats fish in the shallowest waters, their keels occasionally heeling in the mud; and here they take soles, turbot, doree, brill, and skate, in considerable quantities. Government forbids fishing within a mile of the shore, but so soon as night sets in and screens the fishermen and their fleet from the look-outs of the steam gunboat at Granville and the coast-guard sailing-schooner at Cancale, the boats are run within the proscribed limits, and the forbidden fruit is tasted. Oysters are allowed to be taken only on certain days at certain times of the year, a strict watch being kept by the two vessels above mentioned, from

which signals are made when dredging is to commence, and to cease. Fishing proper, however, goes on all the year, the only restriction—with the exception of the fixed distance from shore, as already mentioned—being that of *mailage*, or size of the meshes of the nets. Meshes wider by a fraction of an inch only, having been ordered by government to be used, and their use continued for a few years, brought the population of Cancale to the verge of starvation, fishes that were entangled before, escaping now. In fact, so momentous a question is this one of *mailage* among a class of individuals who earn their living from the depths of the sea, that candidates for state or municipal offices invariably promise the electors to obtain for them the privilege of smaller meshes for the fishing-nets; that promise, whether carried out or not, being the only safe 'card' for securing success. *Mailage* is the bugbear of the Cancaleis.

The hardy Cancale fisherman is essentially a religious man. The very words of the skipper of a boat as he directs his crew to cast the net and begin trawling, show him to be so. 'À la grâce de Dieu,' says he, as the huge snare goes over the side. The Cancaleis belong to the purest Breton race, a pious one in thought and in deed; and a single glance at the small pier of the haven of La Houle will be sufficient to reveal their character and that of their belongings. On that pier is erected a signal-post with a night alarm-bell, to notify danger to the fishing-fleet at sea; also, a stone cross, where the women come, when that ominous bell sounds, to kneel and pray. Many are the heart-rending scenes witnessed here, when, after hours of deep supplication and anxious watching, it is found that the boat on board of which is a husband, or a son, or a brother, is not numbered among those that have weathered the tempest, and happily reached the anchorage. As many as fifty or sixty boats have been lost in one tide, and one-fourth of the inhabitants rendered thereby objects of public charity.

The great man at Cancale is the Naval Commissary. He settles all vital questions, and represents the Minister of the navy. He looks to every minute observance which binds the fishermen—who are always under the articles of war—to the government; he can try them by court-martial, or send them to prison with a word. He is another of the 'bogies' of their surroundings.

The crew of each boat cannot be fewer than four—namely, the master or skipper, with two men and a boy. During the Crimean War, however, all the fishermen were drafted by government into men-of-war. A few disabled sailors, old men, and boys under fourteen years of age, and the women and children, were the only persons left in the villages of La Houle and La Cancale. Starvation stared them in the face; but the women set to work, and, with the aged and crippled seamen and the youths not in their teens, 'manned' such luggers as they could, fished as well as they could, and saved the district from complete obliteration, although it has not even yet recovered from the depression this abnormal state of things entailed.

In the summer season, fewer hands are needed on board the fishing-craft than during the bois-

terous winter-time; hence all superfluous seafaring men, together with many a landsman unused to plough the main in any shape, but who has a fancy, nevertheless, for creating what he calls a little *pecule*—stock of cash averaging about twenty pounds for five months—embark for the Newfoundland cod fisheries, returning therefrom when autumn sets in. These Newfoundland crews are remarkably unmaritime, only a very few being genuine 'salts,' the rest being composed of individuals expert in the preparation of the fish, and of landmen to whom sea-sickness is an ordinary sensation. With elements like these packed in unseaworthy ships, many a Breton merchant is enriched, and many a Breton home desolated. However, as Kingsley sings:

Men must work, and women must weep.
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour bar be moaning.

It may not be foreign to this paper to say a word or two on a phase of the law affecting the marine in France, since it has already been mentioned that the fishermen of Cancale are under naval subjection. Every sailor, whether in the merchant service, or enrolled in a reserve of that of the state, is liable at any time to be called 'to the flag,' and to do duty on board a man-of-war. While so employed, a part of his wages is assigned to the feminine portion of his relations—his mother, wife, or sister; and although the share is somewhat moderate, yet it is eagerly sought for by young women, who, if for nothing else, at least for the dole in question are desirous of obtaining Jack's hand. A *délégation* is the name of the document conferring upon the lady the right of drawing the assigned money, and among the Cancaleis maidens it has passed into a by-word. So, if you hear Marie or Céleste of La Houle say to her bosom-friend, 'Je vais être déléguée' (I am about to be delegated), understand that she means that Pierre or Antoine, the smart fisherman, is about to lead her to the hymeneal altar, and to give her the right of pocketing the regulated part of his pay while he is serving.

In conclusion, as we stroll along the calcareous beach of the place we have faintly endeavoured to sketch, a host of children will follow our footsteps, asking for sous. Let us put our hands cheerfully into our pockets and give. The little supplicants are not beggars in the ordinary acceptation of the word; they are the sons and daughters of those whom the Crimean War made orphans.

PLAYING THE WRONG CARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

At a distance of sixty odd miles from London, stands Fildesham, a small town of some three or four thousand inhabitants, and consisting, as do many such places, of one long street, with branches leading in the direction of the various neighbouring villages, to which it stands in the relation of metropolis. It is as peaceful and quiet, as dull and monotonous, as any small country-town need be; so that the stray visitor from London is wont to exclaim against the stagnation of the place, and to wonder what its

inhabitants can find to interest them sufficiently to keep them alive, or at anyrate awake. In this manner do those who dwell in the great centres of population speak of petty towns and villages, forgetting that the drama of life has just as much engrossing interest for each of its actors when played on the tiniest stage in the world, as when it has the Metropolis itself for its theatre.

A little way from the town—a quarter of a mile, perhaps, from the hostel which marked the end of its High Street—stood a house known as the Elms Knoll, or more frequently 'The Knoll' only; and here dwelt Mr Maurice Hythe. This gentleman was highly valued by the townsfolk on account of his promptness in payment, and absence of cavilling at whatever prices were charged; yet they regretted that he was of such secluded habits as seldom or never to be seen in the town. Moreover, no guests ever came to the Knoll, nor were those who called out of courtesy, encouraged to repeat the ceremony. Mr Hythe was an invalid, which partly accounted for his reclusive habits; but he was, besides, a man of silent, almost morose manners, and wherever he was, the place was the gloomier for his presence. This was the testimony of his servants, who were likely to be right in such a matter. He had neither wife nor children; it was reported that he was a widower; but even his servants did not profess to know with certainty. He had perhaps chosen his residence from his hermit-like tastes, for it lay a long way back from the road, and the demesne was fenced and screened on all sides by lofty hedges and tall trees—a screen which became denser year by year, as the owner would not allow the hedges to be trimmed, and so the grounds grew to have a wild, lonely aspect.

When Mr Hythe had been at the Elms Knoll some four years, another strange family came to reside near Fieldenham, in itself an uncommon event; but what made it more singular in this case was, that the new-comers bore the same name as the proprietor of the Knoll, and then it was found that the head of the new family—Mr Ignatius Hythe—was a brother of the elder resident. This was gratifying news to Fieldenham; for the new-comer was not only married, with five or six children, the oldest, indeed, being a young man of nineteen or twenty years, but he was a broad-faced, loud-speaking, bustling man; had been a surgeon in the army; was altogether different from Mr Maurice, and therefore likely, it was hoped, to effect a great change and improvement in the domestic economy of the Knoll. Time passed, however, and this improvement was not visible. Those who were on the alert to note what was going on in the neighbourhood—and these comprised, it is probable, every living soul in it from seven years of age upwards—reported that while Mr Ignatius Hythe was a frequent visitor at Elms Knoll, he was never accompanied by his wife or any of his children; nor did his brother ever return the visit. Thus far it was easy to see; but beyond this no explanation was obtainable; so the habits and peculiarities of Mr Maurice Hythe continued to be a tantalising problem to the townsfolk.

It was on an evening in midsummer, when

one of the long beautiful June days was declining, that the brothers were walking at the back of the Knoll House, pacing to and fro in a small meadow which, from its position and the closeness of its 'hedgerow elms,' formed the most retired spot of the demesne, and therefore, doubtless, the favourite retreat of the owner. It was so silent and gloomy indeed, as to be depressing for a man of Mr Ignatius Hythe's temperament, and of his own free-will he would never have sought such a promenade. He said something of this to his brother, by way of breaking a long silence. Maurice turned his thin sunken face towards him, and with a smile which was almost more bitter than it was sad, said: 'You have not gone through the discipline, Ignatius, which has been my lot.'

'Discipline!' began the other; but evidently altering a speech which was intended to be sarcastic, continued: 'But I was thinking, Maurice, that there was a time when you were the more hearty and lively of the two; and now'—

'And now I am a gloomy misanthrope—perhaps a madman, you would say,' interposed Maurice. 'But what I am, I have made myself; what I suffer, I have brought on myself—as you know.'

'I know that you brood too much on the past,' returned his brother. 'Why don't you let bygones be bygones? You can't recall the past.'

'No!' exclaimed Maurice; 'I cannot, or my grief would not be so bitter. I have had the vision again, Ignatius; that is twice. On its third coming, it will be my death-warning. I have seen my solicitor, and all is settled, as I have told you.'

Ignatius smoked his cigar in silence, and there was an increased depression about him, which implied that this announcement was not altogether to his taste. His brother, too, walked silently on, but there was nothing unusual in this.

'It is of no use my urging you to go among people again,' said Ignatius at last. 'I would stake my life that a single month of cheerful, rational society would get rid of all this hypochondriacal delusion. It is nothing more. However, I will not press the matter; I know what you are. You will not even see the doctor I recommended, I suppose?'

'No, no,' replied Maurice. 'If he saw my wasted and broken figure, he would try all the commonplaces of his art upon me, and perhaps, when he heard me speak, would suggest still greater seclusion, or even restraint. His remedy would not be yours—the mixing with cheerful society. My present mode of living may seem to you a kind of penance; but penance is now all that I ought to live for.'

Ignatius had probably anticipated some such ending to the discussion; for he made no attempt to prolong it, but spoke on different subjects, and ere long took his departure. The cheerfulness and bonhomie which had marked his manner during almost the whole of his interview with his brother, disappeared when he found himself outside the Knoll gates; and during the walk to his own residence, the expression of his face was as sombre as his brother's in his gloomiest mood.

His home was at a smart modern villa, much smaller, much brighter-looking than the Knoll, and commanding from its windows all the gaiety which the high-road could afford; for there, no overgrown hedges or shadowing trees intercepted the view. Mrs Hythe, a lady of middle age, was seated at work in a parlour commanding the aforesaid road; and to her the gentleman at once repaired.

'Well,' he began at once, 'I have had it out with him.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed his wife. 'And what does he say? Does he?'

'Oh! there is nothing fresh,' returned Mr Hythe. 'The only satisfaction I have gained is to know that all is settled against us. I call it against us; of course he does not.'

'What! all that nonsense about trustees and so on?' inquired the lady.

'Exactly,' said her husband. 'It is all settled now; the lawyers have done everything. His property will remain in the hands of trustees for twenty years—all except that paltry sum in the funds; then, if no one appears in that time, it will go half to us or our heirs, and half to that precious hospital.'

'Twenty years!' echoed his wife. 'What good will it be to us in twenty years?'

'Not a fraction,' said Hythe; 'and there will be no raising money upon it; for although there may be a possibility of these shadows and dreams turning to realities, yet who would lend money on such a remote contingency?'

'He is mad; he ought to be put in an asylum!' exclaimed Mrs Hythe angrily.

'Of course he ought,' assented her husband; 'and I can't think where the common-sense of his doctor has been—to say nothing of his conscience and the duty he owes to society—that he has not had him declared out of his mind, and put where he would be taken care of, long ago.' Mr Hythe's tone and air as he said this were sufficiently decided to show that his conscience at any rate would certainly have counselled the 'taking care' of his brother after this fashion. He could not bear to sit quietly down under the disturbing influence of these thoughts, but announced his determination of taking a stroll into the town; and in pursuance of this resolve, set out, after a few minutes' further conversation with his wife.

Myrtle Villa, the name of Mr Ignatius Hythe's residence, was not farther from the town than was Elms Knoll; the Knoll facing a cross-road, while the Villa, as intimated, looked upon the great London highway; so that Mr Hythe was not long in reaching the entrance to Fieldenham. Although the sun had disappeared, the light out in the open country was still clear; but in the town, under the shade of the buildings in the long High Street, the dullness of twilight prevailed, and in nearly all the shops the gaslights were burning.

Some idea of business was possibly attached to this evening stroll, for he knocked at one of the smartest yet most substantial houses in the street, the door of which bore a large brass plate, on which was inscribed 'BRAFF and MARDLE, Solicitors.' In answer to his inquiry, however, it appeared that Mr Mardle was not within.

'It does not greatly matter,' muttered Hythe,

as he turned away; 'he could not have helped me; nor could he have told me anything I do not know.'

He was so absorbed in his reflections, that he was rather surprised to find himself standing opposite to the *King's Arms Hotel and Posting-house*—its old title, which had descended from a past generation, but was now, as regarded the Posting-house, little better than a myth and a fable. In addition to this, the establishment held the Assembly Rooms also; and Mr Hythe had unconsciously halted in front of two large bills, which, affixed to boards that leaned on each side of the doorway, announced that some performance would be held there that evening. He found that Professor Alberto Regalchini, assisted by Mademoiselle Lucile la Petite Tuscane—he smiled as he read these incongruous names—would give his refined entertainment from the Royal Scientific Gallery, London, and as performed with triumphant success in all the chief cities and towns of the British Empire; introducing, the bill went on to say, the celebrated Monologue, in which Professor Regalchini would sustain six separate characters, with appropriate songs; and concluding with a grand ballet, supported by the before-mentioned Mademoiselle Lucile and Professor Alberto. There was a great deal of this; the changes were rung on the names in every possible way; but it was clear enough that there were no other performers, unless we reckon the celebrated pianist Herr von Joinville as one of the Company. Beyond these three at any rate, no other names appeared.

Moved by a sudden impulse, which, to judge from the cynical smile accompanying it, was hardly complimentary to the expected entertainment, Hythe entered the portal. He went along the silent and empty lobby until he reached what was evidently the pay-place; but no one sat at the receipt of custom, till, while he hesitated what to do, a young man appeared from the adjoining bar, evidently attracted by the sound of footsteps; so Mr Hythe judged from observing that he passed the back of his hand quickly over his lips, on seeing the stranger. 'I will take a ticket for this entertainment,' said Hythe. 'It has commenced, I presume?'

'Just this morn', said the young man. He knew it had been in action for half an hour, but, as he afterwards observed to his friend, 'he wasn't going to erab the business.' 'Reserved—stalls—or area, sir? Reserved is two shillings—stalls, one shilling—area, sixpence, sir. No half-price.'

'If there is room in the reserved, I will take one of them,' said Hythe.

'O yes, sir; you will find room there.—Thank ye, sir,' continued the young man, as he handed a yellow ticket marked 503, which, from its worn and limp condition, had evidently done duty many a night before.

Mr Hythe passed through the green baize-covered door, and found himself in the Assembly Room. It was a large dull-looking place, with walls divided into old-fashioned panellings; a number of Windsor chairs and forms; a raised platform at the further end. The room would have seated between three and four hundred persons comfortably, and there were some seventeen or eighteen present. No one at all in the

reserved seats; the hotel proprietor's children in the stalls; townspeople in the area.

Professor Regalchini was bowing and leaving the stage as Mr Hythe entered; having just concluded his Mysterious Marvels of Modern Magic, as performed before the Court and Aristocracy—for the Professor was a conjurer also—and then the pianist struck up the *entr'acte* music. Hythe was able to tell that the haggard-looking man at the pianoforte was no common player; and he listened, with more interest than he had anticipated, to a piece which must have been caviare to the multitude.

Then Professor Regalchini came on for his celebrated Monologue Impersonations, and was in succession a Yorkshire farmer, a bonnie fish-wife, a swell of the period, a Highlander, Paddy from Cork, and Mr Pickwick, spectacles and all. No doubt it was all very clever, but dreary; so horribly dreary, and so suggestive of something seen a hundred times before, that the scanty audience could not be roused to enthusiasm by the performance. Then came duets in character and out of character, by Mademoiselle Lucile and the Professor; and then the Grand Ballet, which would have been more miserable and depressing than anything that had gone before it, but for the wonderful grace and beauty of the child. She was only some twelve years old. The feeble, awkward dancing of her toilworn coadjutor; the wretched attempts at scenery or decoration; the empty room, with its hollow echoes—all were forgotten, or rendered of no account, by the extraordinary accomplishments of the girl, and Hythe found himself watching the dance with interest to the last. He would have remained to the last, had this performance been even more tedious than all which had preceded it, as an idea had formed and developed in his mind, while watching the earlier portion of the 'entertainment.'

The scanty audience filtered slowly from the hall; the gas was turned down; the 'Company'—which, all told, consisted of the two performers, the musician, and the young man who had taken Mr Hythe's money—began folding up 'properties' and clearing off their miserable bits of scenery, &c. All this time Mr Hythe was standing in the darkest corner of the room, unnoticed, or perhaps supposed to be connected with the house; but when the last article had been put aside, and the little group stood in the centre of the platform, counting over the few shillings which evidently constituted the takings of the evening—while the burly proprietor of the hotel eyed them curiously from a little distance—all looked up with a start as Mr Hythe came forward; and he thought the scared expression on their faces indicated a dread that the stranger might be about to make some demand for money. 'The entertainment is over,' began Professor Regalchini. 'I beg your pardon,' he continued, altering his tone; 'I believe I saw you in the reserved seats.'

'Yes,' replied Hythe; 'I had the pleasure of seeing the entertainment this evening. I see it is announced for two nights only. Your stay in the town will not be longer, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir; it is announced for two nights,' said the Professor in a lugubrious tone, and with a glance at the proprietor. 'But the patronage

received does not justify us in repeating the show. We shall not give the entertainment again.'

The Professor was a tall, hungry-looking man, narrow-chested, and stooping, without a trace of any nationality about him save the English, and London English too. A certain asthmatic shortness of breath, which made itself apparent every other minute, showed what a trial his work of that evening had involved. The other members of the Company were standing around, dejected enough, yet with a certain expectant curiosity, as though hoping something might come out of this unlooked-for discussion.

'Well, it is not to the credit of the town to neglect such a performance as yours,' continued Hythe; 'and for our reputation, I think something ought to be done to support you. If you are not engaged, I would ask the pleasure of your company at supper here, with, of course, Mademoiselle and Herr von Joinville.—Mr Bartell'—addressing the proprietor of the hotel—'you can give us a tolerable supper at once, no doubt?'

'Oh, certainly, sir!' exclaimed the landlord, who was no stranger to Mr Hythe, and knew by repute the wealth of his brother. 'In ten minutes, if you please, sir.'

'Then let us have the best you can put on in that time,' said Hythe. 'I leave all to you. Your champagne I know already is good.'

A flush lit up the haggard faces of the two men at this mention of a wine which showed the character of the expected feast; and being invited by the landlord to adjourn to the 'small club-room,' the party followed him at once, due provision being made for the regalement of the assistant elsewhere.

On their way, the Professor stole an instant to whisper to the pianist: 'This is capital, isn't it? But I wonder what he means by it?'

CONVICT SCHOOLS.

BY A CONVICT SCHOOLMASTER.

It was the opinion of Sydney Smith that education—mere book-learning—should not form part of a convict's training. Lord Norton, at a Social Science Congress some few years ago, expressed a similar opinion. That convict schools as at present conducted are failures, is the opinion of many men more practically acquainted with the schools in question than either Sydney Smith or Lord Norton.

Convict prisons and their doings generally are mysteries to the greater part of the outside world. The old-world idea, that cruelties innumerable are being perpetrated daily on the unfortunate inmates, has not yet been exploded. To be more correct, to a large proportion of the inmates, convict prisons are sanatoria where they may recruit their bodily strength, and school their already profound criminal knowledge for further and more extensive depredations on society. A very small proportion, indeed, find a convict prison a worse home than the roof-tree they have left. Surely there is evidence of this in the fact, that a very large percentage return the second, third, fourth, and even fifth

time, to enjoy its immunity from anxiety and the general troubles incident to an honest life. But all this will be found set out fully in *Five Years Penal Servitude*, a book which contains much truth on the subject.

A convict on admission to prison is examined by the senior schoolmaster, in order somewhat to test his ability; and is placed in one of four classes, three of which attend school, while the fourth—about two-thirds of the whole admissions—are excluded, and never, under any pretence but that of letter-writing, are allowed to be present during school-time. This last class includes men of various educational attainments, from those who have received a university education, down to those who are just able to write a letter legibly and pretty correctly as to orthography, to read, say, an ordinary magazine article, and to work arithmetic up to and including weights and measures. When any man of the three school classes arrives at the above educational standard, he is consigned to the non-attending class. These last are allowed, and largely avail themselves of the privilege of having advanced educational works in their cells, including popular and technical educators, text-books of the sciences, dictionaries, &c. Many, during the hours they have to spare, learn a language, or even two, as well as these can be learned without a teacher. Shorthand is a favourite subject, and one which I am afraid is acquired in most instances for doubtful purposes. Those who attend school are taught in much the same way as are similar classes in an ordinary National or Board school.

At this point may be described the kind of men employed by the Civil Service Commissioners as schoolmasters. Originally, there were various methods of admission to the service. Influence was everything in many cases, and consequently unfit men may still be found among convict schoolmasters; but for many years the only channels of admission have been either through examination by the Civil Service Commissioners, or the candidate must be in possession of a certificate from the Education Department—a certificate similar in every respect to, and gained in the same way as that held by London and provincial Board schoolmasters. In fact, the majority of convict masters were originally either National or Board school-teachers—men who have passed five years as pupil-teachers, and two years at a Training College.

Now as to the farcical nature of the school. Convict prisons possess all the plant and mechanism of ordinary schools—teachers, scholars, apparatus of all kinds in abundance; but here, for all practical purposes, the matter ends. The teaching done is practically *nil*, as will be seen from the following facts. The average time allowed each scholar is *one hour per week*, and out of this hour must be deducted the coming to and returning from school, serving out and

collecting material, &c. It is during these hurried minutes, then, that the schoolmasters have their sole opportunity of teaching their grown-up pupils, the greater part of whom are 'dense' to the last degree. If education be at all necessary and beneficial to prisoners, why give eleven hours per day to labour and meals, and but one poor solitary hour per week to improvement of the mind? Why give them just sufficient education to disgust them with their slow progress? Is it probable, is it possible that the schoolmasters can work any improvement? As matters at present stand, both teachers and taught gradually become careless of what the result may be. The great majority of convict schoolmasters would hail with delight any change which would make them something more than nominal schoolmasters; at least all those would do so who have not become entirely denuded to higher aims by their long connection with such a demoralising system.

The question will naturally arise: What are the schoolmasters doing the rest of the day? Well, everything but teaching—superintendence of prison library, registration of prisoners' correspondence, and a host of other duties very right and proper in themselves, but quite foreign to what is generally considered a schoolmaster's work. Taking the week round, his duties average about five hours per day, or equivalent to the time given by a teacher in a Board school, and four out of the five hours are given to extraneous work.

It is the opinion of many persons practically acquainted with the teaching of convicts, that individual or 'cellular' teaching, as pursued at Pentonville and Millbank on the 'separate' system, is the method best adapted to the teaching of such men. There is a shyness, almost unknown to most children, to be found among even the worst of men, which prevents them showing their ignorance; there is a reluctance to begin at the bottom rung of the educational ladder, and thus lay a good foundation. Apart from this is the evil arising from intercourse at school, an evil which is not a light one. Close supervision will not prevent all the harm. There are no incentives to work, as in an outside school, and a lazy scholar infects the whole class. The proportion of scholars really anxious to improve their minds is very small, and these few in a short time relapse into carelessness, partly from contact with their lazy comrades, and partly from disgust at the small amount of attention given to them by those who should be their teachers. Take the case of a middle-aged man ignorant but anxious to learn, being placed by the side of an equally ignorant but quick youth. The older man is ashamed that the youth should see his utter ignorance, and the youth almost invariably, as becomes young criminals, 'pokes fun' at the old man's laborious efforts to form his letters, or to construct words from letters.

This brings us to a question which probably has not received the attention from the authorities which it deserves. Many old men—seventy years of age in many instances—who are averse to receiving any instruction, and who, in all human probability, will never leave the prison alive, are yet forced to attend school simply because they have not arrived at the arbitrary educational

standard set up by the authorities of the prison in which they chance to be confined. These men remain at school often for years, setting a bad example to the younger men by their inertness, and taking up, without the least show of progress, the time which could advantageously be given to the younger men. In their particular line, these old men are often much more apt teachers than the schoolmasters, and take a sort of fiendish delight, though one foot is already in the grave, in instructing their younger brethren in the way which makes them criminals all their lives. It is contended by practical men that 'cellular' or individual, in opposition to class teaching, is the remedy for this state of things. Speaking generally, convict prisons are nurseries of crime and criminals; and nothing pleases the inmates of a prison so much as to see an 'old lag' return to them for a fresh term of penal servitude.

It would be obviously unfair to apply to convict-prison schools an educational test similar to that applied to ordinary day-schools; but now that county jails are under government, there is no apparent reason why an inspector should not be appointed to visit, periodically, all prison schools, both county and convict, in order to insure in some degree uniformity of matter and manner. At present, each chaplain has his own idea of the standard at which a prisoner should arrive before being considered in a position to be removed from school.

To sum up. Give more time to school; make a more judicious selection of scholars; provide individual teaching; and allow the schoolmasters to give their whole time to teaching. These alterations, with some general official supervision, would, it is believed, produce results somewhat commensurate with the money spent on convict schools.

WILL STOUT THE PARISH BEADLE.

A CHARACTER.

IN this quiet, out-of-the-world place, the last of the local Scottish 'worthies' died out with old Will Stout the parish beadle. We admit the stern necessity of getting rid of able-bodied beggars and tramps, yet we owe the poor-laws and the combination houses a kind of sentimental grudge for having devoured our 'gangrels' and wandering minstrels, whose periodic visits were so welcome, especially at farmhouses, during the long winter evenings. Their tales and ballads were a source of never-failing interest to the servants and children. It was a red-letter day when the 'auld sodger' came round to spend his evenings in the kitchen, and sleep in some warm corner of the barn or cow-house. The children stole away from the parlour—where their parents were deep in Boston's *Fourfold State*, or vainly puzzling over Jonathan Edwards—in order to join the kitchen group, as they listened with open mouths to tales of the Peninsular War, rehearsed with some embellishment by the 'auld sodger,' as he vigorously flourished his one remaining arm to illustrate his deeds of heroism.

We can well remember, too, the pleasure with which we children welcomed the visits of 'hunch-backed' Singing Sandy, a lingering remnant of the wandering minstrel fraternity. Too lazy in

his younger days to work, Sandy had gradually acquired wandering habits, into which he fell the more readily from being slightly weak in intellect. It was a standing tradition among the boys that his 'hump' was a made-up one; and certainly Sandy knew how to produce effects. On arriving at a village, his first proceeding was to enter some cottage where he saw roses were plentiful, and get the goodwife to fix a garland of them—the reddest being preferred—round his old battered Kilmarnock bonnet, when forth he issued with a kind of boyish exultation, flourishing his stick round his head, and delighting the hearts of the children with the song of *Rolling-eye*:

Oh, whaur are ye gaun, my bonnie bonnie lass?

Oh, whaur are ye gaun, my honie?

Right modestly she answered me,

An errand to my mannie.

With my rolling eye, faul the diddle eye,

With my rolling eye dunn dary.

From the popularity of this song, with its unfailling chorus, to which Sandy danced as vigorously as his stiff joints and rheumatic frame would allow, he was generally known by the name of 'Rolling-eye,' and the song was regarded as in some way his own especial property. *Johnnie Cope* was another of his songs; but never took the place of *Rolling-eye* in the children's estimation.

Another welcome visitor was the 'chapman,' whose little pack, with its many-bladed knives and its tinsel gauds and jewellery, made the boys' teeth water, and the girls' hearts leap with anticipation. His sales were certainly not such as to increase his fortune; but then the pretence of gaining an honest livelihood was an excuse for obtaining meals—for by some strange coincidence the packman invariably made his appearance at meal-times; nor was he in a hurry to depart and push his trade, till he had rehearsed the local news and delighted the youngsters with some marvellous stories.

These harmless and more or less welcome characters are every year becoming rarer. As long as we had the old beadle, our parish possessed a character of the genuine old type. The beadle in a country parish is an official of no small importance, at least in his own eyes. He has frequently very mixed duties to perform. He is grave-digger, church-officer, bell-ringer, sometimes minister's man, gardener and general-worker, or jack-of-all-trades. If he has been long in the office, he becomes a great authority on all subjects of a purely parochial nature. With us Will Stout had been beadle for over fifty years, and while ministers might come and go, Will remained, apparently a permanent institution. In personal appearance Will was long, lanky, and ill-shapen. He was generally invested in the minister's cast-off clothes, which hung so loosely about him as to give the impression that they had been made for Will at a time when he was of a fuller habit. It was only in his later years that we knew him. By that time, being the older official, he had come to regard himself as of nearly as great importance to the parish as the minister himself. The attendance at this remote parish church had been less affected by the influence of dissent than some neighbouring ones, and Will thought that

he was entitled to no small credit for this. A stranger a few years ago remarked on the large attendance at the services, when Will enlightened him as to the cause of this by naively observing: 'Weel, sir, ye see that me and the minister have kept them weel together.'

While Will generally performed his duties efficiently in his own rough-and-ready kind of way, he had some little weaknesses and peccadillos that the minister and the parishioners as a whole were charitable enough to overlook as frequently as possible. At the time of neighbouring fairs, Will's friends were sometimes known to 'treat' him beyond what was good for him, in order to hear some of his quaint stories. At such times the minister took care, if possible, not to require his services. One day, however, when on necessary parochial duty, he chanced to meet Will on his way from the fair, earnestly endeavouring to carry himself as straight as possible. The minister felt bound to tender a mild remonstrance. Will had to stand on his defence, and having just parted with a petty laird, he sought to screen himself by assuring the minister that Jeems Tamson was away up the road 'far fouer than me.' We are bound to admit, in fairness to Will, that such excesses were very rare.

Will's natural-history tastes were somewhat extensive for his opportunities, and on this account he was a great favourite with the manse boys. He had generally about him one or two pets, such as jackdaws, magpies, and squirrels, besides a miscellaneous collection of birds and four-footed animals, which he had stuffed with his own hands. It was more than shrewdly suspected that Will made the acquaintance of some animals with other objects in view than the study of natural history; and that by the aid of a little wire, where the globe adjoined the laird's policies, he had occasionally found the wherewithal to make a savoury stew. And before our rivers were so strictly preserved, the salmon-pools had frequent visits from him by torchlight. The success of such visits was amply attested by the fact that Will was able to regale himself with a piece of 'kippered' salmon when others had to content themselves with more homely fare. He in all probability regarded this as a harmless way of supplementing his somewhat limited income. His salary as beadle was by no means an extravagant one; and one year when there happened to be a general rise of wages, he made an application for the modest increase of one pound. In the heritors' minute-books we find it recorded that it was agreed to grant the increase on condition that Will would give up salmon-poaching.

Will remained a bachelor, residing with his old mother, who lived to the age of nearly a hundred years. In mature life he was urged by some of his friends to take a wife. He was very cautious, however, in regard to matrimony, and declined the advice, excusing himself on the ground 'that there are many things you can say to your mither you couldna say to a fremit [stranger] woman.' While beadle, he had seen four or five different ministers in the parish, and had buried two or three of them. And although his feelings became somewhat blunted regarding the sacredness of graves in general,

yet he took a somewhat tender care of the spot where the ministers lay. After his extended experience, he was asked to give his deliberate judgment as to which of them he had liked best. His answer was guarded; he said he did not know, as they were all good men. But being further pressed and asked if he had no preference, after a little thought he again admitted that they were all 'guid men, guid men; but Mr Mathieson's claes fitted me best.'

One of the new incumbents, knowing Will's interest in the clothes, thought that at an early stage he would gain his favour by presenting him with a coat. To make him conscious of the kindly service he was doing, the minister informed him that it was almost new. Will took the garment, examined it with a critical eye, and having thoroughly satisfied himself, pronounced it 'a guid coat, a guid coat,' but pawkily added: 'When Mr Watt the auld minister gied me a coat, he gied me breeks as weel.' The new minister, who was fortunately gifted with a sense of humour, could not do less than complete Will's rig-out from top to toe, and so established himself as a permanent favourite with the beadle.

Although he was naturally of an amiable and kindly disposition, Will would occasionally show that he could assume a self-defensive attitude. When the minister of the parish was unexpectedly called away from home, an afternoon service conducted by a neighbour-clergyman would sometimes be substituted for the regular service. At such times it was Will's duty to apprise the parishioners of this change of the hour of service for the day. On one of these occasions, somewhat to the chagrin of the minister officiating, a very small number of the parishioners were present. With some irritation he accused the beadle of having failed to make due intimation. Will stoutly maintained that he had faithfully fulfilled his duties, by not only naming the hour of meeting, but also announcing the name of the minister who was to conduct the services. Still unsatisfied, fresh doubts were insinuated regarding the veracity of Will's statement, which being more than Will could endure, he quietly informed the minister that if he *would* have the true reason of the small attendance, 'it was that he was not very popular in the parish.'

A meal that Will thoroughly relished and was never in living memory known to miss, was his Sunday dinner at the manse. It was a hearty one, and doubtless served to make up for the homely fare of the Saturday previous and the Monday following. It was a dinner given most ungrudgingly by the minister, who regarded Will as part of the Sabbath household. Moreover, he generally had share of whatever had been on the minister's own table. On one occasion, Will had rather the best of the dinner. The minister's family were from home. A modest steak, intended for the minister, had been prepared by the thrifty housekeeper, and was standing ready on the kitchen-table when the beadle arrived. While the servant was making the necessary arrangements for dinner in the minister's parlour, Will in the interval despatched the steak. When the housewife broke out in indignation, he quietly remarked that he had used it under the impression that it was the 'bit bit' prepared for

him. The minister, enjoying the unconscious humour of the situation, first congratulated Will on his good fortune, and then good-humouredly dined on bacon and eggs, which, it may be mentioned, are a never-failing resource in remote country mansees.

Poor old Will's step got gradually slower and slower; but nearly to the very last he carried the minister's books up to the pulpit, and with his own peculiar twitch of the rope, made the bell speak out its metallic ding-dong, ding-dong. Even during the few weeks when he was confined to bed, he would show symptoms of keen interest in his duties and reminiscences, when some of his old friends led him to tell again some of his experiences. When the end was visibly approaching, poor Will wondered who would dig his grave. The minister touched his heart by telling him that he would like to do that service for him with his own hands. For as Will always loved his minister, and would bravely stand up for him, whenever any one hinted a querulous or disparaging word, so, like a true-hearted man, the minister loved old Will, and felt that he was losing a true friend. This offer of the last service being the expression of true regard, deeply touched the heart of the failing man, who, after that, seemed content to die. Although the churchyard was very crowded with graves, Will had reserved a spot in which to rest beside his old mother. On his funeral day, the whole parish, young and old, assembled to show their respect for the good old creature.

The church seems now scarcely like itself, since the old quaint form departed from it. He will be long remembered as the last of the parish characters; and kindly feelings will be awakened in many as they read on a simple stone: 'Here lie the Remains of WILLIAM STOUT, who was for Fifty Years Parish Beadle.'

PAPER AND PINE-APPLE FIBRE.

THE variety of purposes which paper can be made to serve is every day increasing. A few of the latest of these are worth mention. It appears that thick paper and cardboard can be rendered as hard and horny as papier-mâché by means of a kind of cement called Chinese Varnish, which is easily prepared from blood, lime, and alum. With four parts of slaked lime and a little alum are mixed three parts of fresh blood well beaten up. The thick flowing mixture that results is, we are informed, at once ready for application to paper or card.

Amongst the curiosities of the late Australian Exhibition is stated to have been a house entirely constructed from paper, containing carpets, curtains, dishes, and what not, all made of the same useful material. Whether the dishes aforesaid were similar to the plates and dishes made in Germany, we cannot say; but in that country, we are informed, platters are being manufactured from sawdust and paper in the following manner: Selected plane shavings are bound into bundles, and steeped in a bath of weak gelatine solution about twenty-four hours, then dried, and cut into suitable lengths. Plates are cut of strong paper or thin pasteboard of the size of the objects to be produced. These are moistened with a liquid

consisting of weak gelatine solution with sodium water-glass, and pressed in heated metallic moulds. After drying, the pressed paper objects are coated on both sides with an adhesive material made of five parts Russian gelatine, and one part thick turpentine; the shavings are applied to them, and the whole is subjected to pressure. (Wood-shavings alone would, because of their unequal thickness, present uneven surfaces.) The objects are now cut, if necessary, dried, and varnished.

In a former number of this *Journal*, mention was made of the dome of an observatory having been constructed of paper compressed to the hardness of wood. If buildings can be satisfactorily roofed with what is usually considered so frail a substance, it is not surprising to learn that hats and umbrellas can be made from the same material, a paper of extraordinary fineness and strength being said to furnish the people in the Corea with both of those useful articles.

Talking of dress equipment, a writer in *The Theatre* mentions having seen in Paris a magnificent stage costume enriched with the loveliest lace he ever beheld. In his own words: 'The dress was displayed on account of that lace; and that lace was worth, perhaps, twenty-five francs; for it was paper, wonderfully stamped, and represented trains of fuchsias, and looked just as much a piece of real lace as a Paris diamond by night looks an old mine gem. Parisian actresses wear that paper-lace a great deal; it is tough, soft, and very effective. To wear a costly lot of lace which may be ruined in a night, when very cheap lace-paper looks as well, is considered the height of folly by intelligent foreigners.'

Other triumphs in the way of utilising paper may safely be predicted. By some enterprising Americans at least, the time is thought not far distant when yachts, lighter, swifter, and stancher than any craft yet built, will astonish the maritime world. Not very long ago, a citizen of the United States made a journey of over two thousand miles in a paper canoe, built for him by a firm in New York. The total weight of the canoe was only fifty-eight pounds; and for strength, durability, and elasticity, could not, they say, be surpassed. The paper-skin, after being water-proofed, was finished with hard varnishes, and then presented a solid and perfectly smooth surface to the action of the water, unbroken by joint, lap, or seam. Unlike wood, it has no grain to be cracked or split; and paper being one of the best non-conductors, boats of this kind appear to be admirably adapted—which cannot be said of steel or iron—for use in all climates. The surface, polished like a coach-panel, never shrinks or absorbs moisture. Once employed by boat-builders, the conclusion naturally suggests itself, that some day a new and hitherto unsuspected meaning may attach to the proverbial phrase of a 'paper-war.'

Apropos of our subject, it may not be uninteresting to note that the amount of paper required for the census of last year was stated to have been fifty-seven tons thirteen hundredweight—comprising considerably over seven and a half million householders' schedules, more than seventy-nine thousand enumerating books, and one hundred and ten different forms for vessels.

As regards the raw materials out of which paper is made, the immense commercial importance of cotton and jute as textile products suggests a few

important considerations. Within a comparatively short space of time, these fibres have been the means of founding industries which rank by the side of the time-honoured silk, wool, and linen manufactures. Is it not natural to suppose that if, in scientific matters—notably electricity—we seem almost daily increasing our knowledge, similar progress should be made with respect to those more prosaic subjects which very closely affect the personal and domestic comforts of mankind? Amongst the latter, clothing is, after food, the most essential requirement. The discovery or application, therefore, of a new textile fibre is of much economic importance; and the recently published accounts of the properties of the Ananas (or pine-apple) fibre are sufficient to show that in all probability a very valuable raw material for the manufacture of certain qualities of cloth has been placed within the category of textile vegetable fibres.

The pine-apple is justly esteemed in Europe for its delicious aromatic flavour, and when grown in this part of the world, requires to be kept in hot-houses. In the more sunny regions of the East and West Indies, South America, Mexico, and the Philippine Islands, the pine-apple grows in wild luxuriance. Yet, however widespread its fame as a table-fruit, it is doubtful whether many people know of the plant in connection with the textile fibre it produces. According to one practical authority, the leaves of both the wild and the cultivated kinds yield fibres which, when spun, surpass in strength, fineness, and lustre those obtained from flax. It is further added, that in its manufactured state, this product has been long known as an article of commerce in the countries referred to. One of the leading trade papers of the German textile industry has given attention to the investigation of the properties of this fibre. From India and from Central America, two specimens of tissues woven from it had been received. The former was a piece of striped muslin; and the latter a sample of dress material in which the yarn had been bleached; thus showing that the fibre is capable of undergoing that process successfully. As to the uses to which the fibre can be put, it is asserted that it can be employed as a substitute for silk, and as a material for mixing with wool and cotton. It is likewise stated that for sewing-thread, twist, trimmings, laces, curtains, and the like, its particular qualities render it specially applicable.

As to the extent of its production—which is a primary consideration, from an industrial point of view—it is remarked that the plant in its wild state covers large tracts of land; and that, owing to the absence of suitable machinery for preparing the fibre, the domestic consumption, in the principal countries where it grows, has never increased beyond a point which leaves a large quantity for export. The large size of the leaves gives a great length of fibre, which is an advantage for manufacturing purposes. It has hitherto been mostly used, in the countries referred to, for the making of fishing-nets, lines, &c.; its great strength, and its peculiar quality of not being injured by a prolonged submersion in water, rendering it particularly adapted for such purposes. The fact that every portion of the plant is utilised either as fruit or fibre, has been urged to prove

the lucrative results which may attend its cultivation. In conclusion, the writer considers that the ultimate adoption of the pine-apple fibre as a manufacturing product is assured, and urges on German manufacturers to devote special attention to this new branch of textile industry.

THE LITTLE BRIDGE.

They parted on the Little Bridge
Which spans the running water,
The bright-eyed youth with fluent tongue,
And she—the yeoman's daughter.

A few fond words—a stolen kiss,
A little golden trinket,
'Twas all—but that his heart could change
She did not dare to think it.

He journeyed to bright southern lands
Where tropic skies bent o'er him,
And wooed blind Fortune till she cast
A shower of gold before him.

Then Fame took up her trumpet, tuned
To sound his praise in story,
For much that to his life belonged
Was what the world calls glory.

A ribbon marked his high degree,
His name had added letters,
And not on him was any sign
Of life's more galling fetters.

The maiden's path lay towards the north;
She toiled for daily guerdon,
And meekly bore her low estate,
Nor felt her task a burden,

Till 'hobo deferred' her spirit broke,
And thorns seemed springing round her,
And thoughts that once were purest joy,
Had only power to wound her.

A poor old maid with fading cheek
Toils on from early morning,
With scanty thanks, and little praise,
And oftentimes heartless scorning.

And yet sometimes she sees the Bridge,
And hears the river flowing,
When memory lifts the shroud of years,
The dead past calmly showing.

And sometimes he, in idle mood,
'Mid silence all unbroken,
Just wonders if the Bridge still stands
Where their last words were spoken.

The Little Bridge still lightly spans
The rippling, running water;
But no bridge spans the gulf 'twixt him
And her—the yeoman's daughter!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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'BY CONTRACT.'

ONE of the early results of social organisation is the law of prices. When commodities begin to flow steadily to market, the level of values becomes calculable over a given period. Upon this the system of supply by contract is based. Clearly, if hazard ruled the relations of men to men, it would be impossible to forecast business of any kind. But hazard plays a very small part in human affairs, and even that part diminishes with the progress of civilisation; hence, as the foretelling of the future becomes more warrantable, the contract system extends and reaches new departments of social life. As soon as the demand for a particular article is large enough for an average price thereof to be determined, some shrewd, well-informed man will endeavour to supply it for a given period at a given price. His success depends upon eliminating some unnecessary factor in the series between producer and consumer; and the economy effected is shared between the contractor and his clients.

Everybody knows the railway contractor, who is willing to build an iron road anywhere, of any length, and in any space of time. The world has been metamorphosed by him. By his profound mastery of human powers, mental and bodily, he has enriched mankind in wealth, health, and happiness. Again, the army, the navy, the indigent poor, the sick folks in hospital and workhouse, are fed, clothed, and purveyed for generally, by contract. A vast amount of technical knowledge, of business foresight, of capital and credit, is needed for these giant operations; a small miscalculation might bring irreparable disaster to those engaged in them. Below the magnates are thousands of small contractors, dealing with the public in manifold ways, all showing enterprise, judgment, knowledge, and directive skill of a superior kind. By their ministrations, individuals and families enjoy the benefits of a completer civilisation than they could if served otherwise; saving money, time, and trouble in a considerable degree.

As a specimen of the odd ways in which this mania for contract manifests itself, it may be mentioned that there are tailors who contract at a moderate fixed tariff for clothes to be used only for a stipulated time and then returned. Four times a year, or oftener if you like to pay more, a box arrives at your address containing the suit adapted for the particular season, perfect in fit, perfect in fashion. In the same box you return the clothes just worn, untroubled by any negotiation with those unconscionable depreciators of value, the 'old-clo' men. Again, the glittering equipages dashing by the modest pedestrian, and bestowing upon him arrogantly-flung mud, are not always owned by the supercilious persons lolling at ease. Sometimes the modest coachman is the proprietor of all the impressive bravery; and those in the places of honour have no more claim to the stately chariot than the 'shilling fare' has to the hansom cab.

The contracting job-master is indeed one of the wonderful race who diminish the friction of society by making things easy. His enterprise gives brilliance to the parks, in prancing steeds, gorgeous coaches, elegant phaetons, and all the items of equine and vehicular movement. He is ready to make a contract for carrying the whole of the *beau-monde* on undeniably favourable terms, and also to supply it with retinues worthy of a Prince of the Blood. He is capable of humble services equally with the grandest. He will furnish an undemonstrative Quaker with the most homely of broughams, horsed by the mildest thing on four legs, and driven by a man whose solemnity of aspect, taciturnity, and disrelish for intoxicants add a finish to the turn-out beyond compare.

The Metropolitan job-master is only one of the numerous contractors for the use of horse-flesh. Hundreds of provincial gentlemen have their stables furnished at so much a year. Those who have had much to do with horses, know the risks and annoyances connected with purchase and sale. In spite of 'warrants,' veterinary advisers, subtle grooms, and the whole preservative host surrounding

the buyer, he may spend a hundred guineas upon an animal that is not worth the half of that sum when it comes to be employed. The horse-contractor abolishes all the plagues besetting an owner, and leaves us free to enjoy our gallops, drives, and pugeantry without a trace of equine care. Further, a contractor can supply the most perfect matches for 'pairs,' in colour, style, and action. His guarantee for the temper, pace, and performance of saddle-horses may be accepted, so that a timid or awkward rider can enjoy equestrian exercise without fear. But not the least advantage of hired, or as they are usually termed jobbed, horses is that no capital is locked up by the hirer in a dubious investment.

Another useful contractor is appearing upon the scene—the family physician, who for a fixed stipend visits the household at stated intervals. Daily, bi-weekly, or weekly, a medical guardian will attend us, not simply to cure our fleshly ills, but to prevent them altogether. The vast progress in hygiene and sanitary science suggests a new departure in the popular estimation of health. The strongest of us have some little weakness in the bodily machine, some inadequacy of mental force; it is for medical guardians to deal with these after the most business-like fashion, and, so far as Nature permits of amelioration, to make our constitutions better than they were originally. This the Esculapian contractors do not hesitate in attempting. All good citizens contract with life-assurance Companies that their survivors may have financial consolation for their loss; and to contract for a long continuance of life itself, and life of the most effective and delightful kind, is surely of equal importance, though somewhat of a novelty.

Many people now make yearly contracts with their dentist. One effect of extended physiologic knowledge is a greater care for the teeth. The importance of maintaining them sound and handsome is admitted by all. Owing to the ravages civilisation has made in our dental possessions, few persons are untroubled by them. A great art and important industry has arisen, and the dentist is a power in the land. But many sufferers find it better to employ him preventively, than curatively to obtain his highest services. There is much in favour of this system which foreshadows a great and salutary improvement in individual welfare. What would sufferers *not* give to the dentist who could keep them free from toothache and preserve their teeth brilliant and useful to old age?

Some hotel-keepers and restaurateurs are beginning to contract for the supply of a certain number of meals, the tariff varying with the quantity. For instance, one can have twenty dinners for so much, fifty for proportionately less, and be dined every day in the year for proportionately less still. This system is much in vogue in France; and its advantages are so obvious to hosts and guests, that it should be

successful in all our commercial towns. It is only a development of the 'ordinaries' of market towns, where a host, depending upon a certain number of diners, is able to cater generously in proportion to the number of his guests. In every business place, a co-ordinated scheme between purveyors and eaters would result in an immense saving to both, and thereby to the community.

In London and other large cities, there are gardeners and florists who contract for the supply of plants and flowers for the year round or for the season. By their aid, and at small expense, the house and garden-plot can be made charming with all that the floral world can afford. Nor need we ever want a piano or fail to have our drawing-rooms resplendent, our dining-rooms fairy-like, the family gratified, and guests delighted, for a comparatively small charge. Some people have a fancy for changing their household furniture, and love to follow fashion in upholstery as they do in clothes. They have created a number of contractors to minister to their desires. At no great cost, boudoirs and reception-rooms can be furnished with the last thing in chairs, couches, cabinets, mirrors, ornaments, and the whole detail of things useful and unuseful.

Railway Companies are ready to contract with individuals or parties for transport over a given distance; and indeed a very large part of their business is conducted on this method. Millions of mercantile men are carried from suburban homes to town and back daily, to the great benefit of themselves and the Companies. But the system is capable of large extension. Were rates lowered to meet the wages of the working-classes, and were the services accelerated, immense numbers would reside in the country and remoter suburbs, who are now imprisoned in towns. The cost of running five hundred people to business and back would be very small to the Company, who could thus place their resources at the convenience of the humblest. Railway Companies might enormously increase their Third Class traffic.

Since the use of bicycles and tricycles has so largely increased, a number of contractors for the supply of them have appeared. Youngsters who cannot afford to spend fifteen or twenty pounds upon a machine, can rent one on moderate terms; and those who object to the cost of keeping them in repair, may now negotiate to have their 'flying wheel' always in perfect order for a small quarterly payment.

The system of sub-contracts has been much increased in recent years. It pervades most complicated businesses, but is almost universal in the building trades. With the stagnation of the litter, which has been the rule in most places, contracts have been refined to the extreme. Single workmen have contracted with employers for a particular detail of a house or building.

In Paris, an Association has been formed

which contracts to maintain houses and every description of building in perfect repair at a fixed annual charge. It is called the *Compagnie de Bâtimens*. Property owners in England would be glad of the services of a similar institution, and there is no doubt such will appear eventually. The destructiveness of the weather is more serious than that of fire. Not one building in a hundred is burned, but every building is incessantly being injured by the atmosphere; and often workmen are careless when they are sent to repair roofs and drains.

Gas Companies contract to furnish us with light. In New York, a powerful Company is now laying down pipes to supply heat to a large district. From a centre, steam will be sent by mains, and these will communicate with small pipes laid into houses and shops; and the Company is prepared to contract for the maintenance of any temperature that the users please. A system like this is particularly available for cities like Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, where large numbers of people inhabit one tenement, and where the cost of fuel is high.

The extraordinary progress of electrical science, and its application to domestic purposes, will bring in a new species of contractors, whose ministrations promise to revolutionise our homes. Light, heat, and motors are now on offer by several Companies, and at rates that almost compel their acceptance.

As the economical education of the masses advances, great progress in the contract system will follow. The many will perceive the utility of co-operation, where few now see it. The army of intermediaries that operate between producers and consumers, has been created by the necessities of a rudimentary civilisation.

The contract system has many aspects, but its effect is always the same. It prevails under numerous forms in almost all the major departments of trade. Produce of every description is sold by contract at certain dates. Manufactures are also disposed of in the same manner. Of course, there are vast transactions for immediate delivery and at the market rates; but the characteristic of modern commerce is sale of 'futures.' It would be impossible to conduct the giant trades in cotton, corn, wool, iron, &c., in small day-to-day transactions. Merchants and manufacturers are obliged to look ahead, and this brings in contracts. Upon the price of the raw material he will receive in the autumn, the cotton-spinner makes a contract to sell yarn; and the cloth-maker his subsequent contract for calico delivery. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, have all been contracted for many times over. Cheapness and abundance have followed in the wake of the great controllers of supply; and the ease and certainty of modern purveyance have grown with the development of the contract system. By it, society goes along as by clockwork, each day making it more accurate. By degrees, all superfluous details in the mechanism are put aside, to the improvement of regularity and the diminution of cost.

Reduced to ultimate financial terms, the contract system means the massing of many credits together. The public and a contractor agree to purchase a certain quantity of a commodity at a stated time. This brings all concerned into

definite relationships. Demand and supply are exactly balanced; loss and waste are avoided. The resulting economy is the profit enjoyed by the contractor and his customers.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXI.—ALL DAY, HIRAM LOOKED ABOUT FOR CHANCES, AND NEXT MORNING HE SET OUT AFOOT IN PURSUIT OF EMPLOYMENT.

'MR. SEARCH,' said that official of the Omnibus Company who controlled Hiram's destinies, 'after to-day, your services will not be required.'

'Oh?' said Hiram. 'I reckon I've got a right to ask what that's for.'

'You have twice appointed a substitute without leave, and you were yesterday two hours absent from your post without even appointing a substitute. The driver tells me that the block in Cheapside was your fault, and yours only.'

'He's maybe right, mister,' responded the conductor. 'But it won't happen again.'

'I'll take care of that,' said the official person.

'It'll suit me better to hold on awhile,' said Hiram, 'if you don't mind. It's rather an awkward corner to get throwed off at, this is. Give me another trial.'

'We shall not require your services after to-day,' repeated the official drily.

'Then I must try to get along without yourn,' responded Hiram. 'Bus-conducting ain't half such a berth as the Prince of Wales's, is it?'

'It's a pity,' said the official, shaking his head at Hiram, a little mollified by the discharge of his own thunderbolt, 'that you don't stick at your work, Search. You're a smart fellow, and a sober fellow; and if you'd only stick, you'd do.'

'There was a minister had a nigger once, mister,' returned Hiram, 'and whenever he misbehaved, the parson used to cowhide him. And while he cowed him, he'd take a text and preach, just so as Peter shouldn't find the thing monotonous. One day, Peter turns round and kind o' makes an appeal. "If you flog, flog," says he; "and if you preach, preach; but don't flog and preach too at the same time."'

'O yes,' said the official, shaking his head again at Hiram with a humorous aspect; 'I know that yarn. I've heard it before, Search—I've heard it before.'

'Well, now,' said Hiram, with a propitiatory twinkle in his eye, 'I go with Peter. Don't give me the sack and lecture me. Look here! You take the sack back again, and lecture me till I'm good. It won't take long.'

'No, Search, no,' returned the unbending official. 'It can't be overlooked. Here's my last word: if you like to come back in a week's time, I'll give you another chance—perhaps.' There-with he turned and left the delinquent.

'That won't do,' said Hiram, addressing himself emphatically. 'There's a chance a minute opening somewhere. I can't afford to wait a week for one. There's the little gell to be provided for. It's kind of you to offer me a holiday, mister, but I can't stop to take it. Here goes the hull population of this planet hotfoot, full tilt, running fit to split from dawn to sunset

every day, after the day's rations, with some exalted parties looking on serene and smilin' at the racket—Dukes, and a Prince or tew; but it's no use for me to sit down alongside the superior human article. Perhaps I could smile at the racket as pretty as any of 'em; but that wouldn't find me two days' rations every day; and I must run with the ruck, I reckon, and kick and elber right and left, and run cunning. Very well, then.—Bank, ma'am! Whitechapel, mister! This way for the Bank. Reg'lar load o' capitalists to-day. Get along!

All day, Hiram looked about for chances, and next morning he set out afoot in pursuit of employment. After many intricate wanderings, many inquiries, and as many rebuffs, he came, in a retired tumble-down square midway between Fleet Street and Holborn, upon an announcement that compositors were wanted. Anything dingier than the dingy placard which bade Hiram inquire within, anything dirtier than the windows, anything filthier and more rickety than the stairs, he had not seen in London. Upon one landing, a barrel of printer's ink had leaked, and having trodden upon the sticky mass, he ploughed his way up-stairs as a fly goes over that humane invention the 'catch-'em-alive.' An exaggerated smell of damp newspaper—the distinctive odour which attaches to an ill-ventilated printing office—saluted the applicant's nostrils; and a hot blast of air, such as a furnace might be supposed to breathe if its digestive apparatus were thoroughly diseased, swept at him as he opened a swinging door at the head of the stairs. Right and left at double frames, pale men and weedy lads faced each other, picking up types as if for bare life. In the streets, the spring sunshine had been bright; but here, above every double frame hung a cob-webbed gas-bracket, patched with pasted paper here and there, to cure the leakage of gas, which nevertheless smelt horribly; and from each bracket sprang two flaring lights, with flimsy sheets of green paper hung before them on a contrivance of wire, to shelter the worker's eyes from the glare. No man or boy looked up from his work to remark the new-comer; but after an uncertain pause of perhaps a minute, a sorrowful, melancholy-looking man in a ragged frock-coat and a soiled apron, appeared at another door, and approaching Hiram, asked his business.

'You want compositors?' asked Hiram.

'Yes,' said the other.

'I want work.'

'Very well,' said the melancholy-looking man; 'you can begin at once, if you like.' He led the way to a frame on which reposed a pair of empty cases. 'All this matter is for distribution. It's all minion, and all one fount.' Saying this, he pointed to a galley-rack on which rested many columns of half-washed type, and betook himself to the other end of the room.

'Say,' said Hiram to a pale and long-drawn lad at the next case, 'is there a sink here anywhere?'—The lad nodded his head sideways, and went on with his work.—Hiram lifted a galley and carried it to the sink, and having washed the type thoroughly, took up a handful and began to throw it into the case. His fingers had lost the feel of custom, and he was awkward at first; but he recovered the art by-and-by,

and went ahead at a great rate. 'Work pretty regular here?' he asked his neighbour.

'Yes,' said he, nodding vigorously at the case and working head and shoulders with unnecessary ardour.

'Piece or 'stab?' inquired Hiram laconically. The inquiry being translated meant: 'Are we paid by results, or at a settled rate?' 'Stab is compositors' English for established, and is even, by that system of compression in vogue amongst them, made to signify a certain fixed wage. In their working hours, compositors are the most taciturn of all working-people.

'Haven't you asked?' inquired the youth, turning his eyes on Hiram for the first time.

'No,' said Hiram. The pale lad having once looked at him, seemed determined to see as much of him as he conveniently could at one eye-ful. The new-comer had turned back the cuffs of his shirt over coat sleeves of new black cloth; and the cuffs were white, and were, as their position proved, actually attached to an under garment. Hiram's collar, presumably belonging to the same garment, was spotless; his boots were well made and new. His well-brushed glossy stove-pipe hat hung on a peg behind him. The pale lad gaped at this show of respectability.

'I don't fancy you are one of our sort,' he said meekly.

'No?' said Hiram, rattling the type into the boxes, growing pretty full by this time. 'Why?'

'It's a turn-over house,' returned the lad. 'We're all improvers here.'

'That's a moral blessing in its way,' responded Hiram, to whom the lad's phrases bore no meaning. 'Ain't it, now?'

The pale youth smiled drearily in answer to Hiram's glance. 'We're turn-over apprentices,' he explained. 'We've never served our time, and we don't belong to the Union; so we only get paid half-rates.'

'What's that?' said Hiram.

'Why,' said the lad, 'it's sevenpence-halfpenny a thousand for minion. That's the regular pay. They give us threepence three-farthings here. At the end of the week, you put in a bill at full prices, and they halve it. Suppose you put in a bill for two pounds, you'll get a sovereign.'

Hiram gave vent to a long faint whistle, and having at that moment cleared his hand, walked over to the melancholy-looking man in the soiled apron.

'Look here, mister,' said he; and repeated the lad's statement. 'Is that so?'—The melancholy man in the soiled apron said it was.—'So,' said Hiram, 'you reckon on half-starving this mean crowd, as an inducement to them to cut the throat of the trade they starve by.'—The melancholy man said he might put it that way if he liked.—'Well,' responded Hiram, 'when a man's hard up, he gets into singular company. You don't seem to thrive, and there's a kind of saddened aspect about the hull kyhoot. I don't make one of this ragged regiment, mister. No, sir; I do not. I am not afraid of work. I could always beard Employment in his den and Labour in his hall! But my intellect,' added Hiram, with a gracious smile, 'is not yet sufficiently overcooked to permit me to jine in with this peculiar enterprise.—Good afternoon, sir.'

'I thought it wouldn't suit you,' said the pale youth who had given Hiram the character of the place. 'They ain't a high-spirited lot as comes here.' He rubbed his nose with the back of his composing-stick as he made this reflection, and cast a longing look at the case of type which Hiram had left partly filled. His own one was almost empty.

'You can take that,' said Hiram, adjusting his cuffs and reaching for his hat. The lad thanked him, and changed the position of the cases; and Hiram departed, without being noticed much by anybody. 'An hour and a half wasted,' he thought as he went down the littered inky stairs and emerged upon the streets again. 'I'm game to run as cunning as I can,' said Hiram, drawing a long breath of purer air; 'but I'll do nothing to be ashamed of. Me and my little gell can starve, without cutting other people's throats to be allowed to do it.'

For the first time since that adventurous summer day on which he had met Gerard Lumby, the sun went down without his having earned a halfpenny. This reflection saddened him, and he went home footsore and weary. Sitting alone, and smoking a pipe over the ashes of the fire which had that morning boiled his tea and cooked his rasher of bacon, he resolved on a house-to-house visitation through the business realms of London, in search of employment. The stupendous nature of that inquisition half frightened him at first; but on reflection, he adopted the method as being, after all, the only practicable one. 'I can't advertise,' he said between the whiffs of his pipe, 'because I haven't got the money; and if I had, what could I advertise for?' "TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.—A YOUNG MAN who knows his way about, and has travelled, is open to employment as Clerk, Scenic Artist, Newspaper Editor, Chair-mender, Compositor, Architect, or Sandwich-man. Berth in clothes-store good enough to begin with. No reasonable offer refused. Open to negotiate with Bill-stickers, Railway Companies, Members of Parliament, and the Public generally."—They'd laugh at that,' said Hiram with a dreary sadness. 'In this effete old empire, a man seems to think he's done his duty if he's learned enough of one craft to help him to cheat somebody into believing that he can work at it. They bind him 'prentice to learn bricklayin'; and if he's got a head on him at all, he knows all they can teach him in as many days as they make him spend years. They reckon on taking seven years to teach a man to stick types on end, and they won't let him earn a living at it till that seven years is wasted. I'm a fairish smith, and I'm a decent wheelwright, and there ain't a better cabinet-maker in London; but because I haven't wasted seven years apiece in learning to use hammer, spokeshave, and chisel, I'm a trade pariah. That's what's the matter with me—I'm a trade pariah. And I call it too cruel ridiculous, that because I'm smarter than ten of these fellers put together, I'm offered half-wages.' He knocked the ashes from his pipe, and laid it down on the hob tenderly. It was the identical pipe he had vainly striven to light in the lane ten miles from Brierham, and he had an affection for it. 'No,' he continued, half aloud; 'I can't advertise; and what's the

good of answering? I suppose I can't have spent less than two pound at that since I've been in London; and I never had so much as one reply. There was that clerkship I went for personally. Shall I ever forget it? A street-full of respectable applicants, and every man-jack of 'em with testimonials enough to fill a butcher's basket. I shall get slanged a good deal on this journey; I shall be a decided noosance to a heap of Christian people. But where there's an advertisement, I'm one of five hundred; and here at least I *shall* have a chance of lighting on somebody who wants me, and hasn't had time to advertise for me and bring the other four hundred and ninety-nine cavorting around. It's the other four hundred and ninety-nine that spoils things. Five hundred rats, and only one wanted to take charge of the candle-store. Five hundred redskins, and one white scalp. Five hundred frying-pans, and only one fire.' A mere moonbeam of a smile illumined his long countenance. 'I am becomin' figgerative,' he said, 'and that says: "Lively, Hiram."—You'd like another fill, wouldn't you?' apostrophising his pipe. 'You look hungry. You shall have it.' He filled his pipe again, and having lit it, began slowly to address. This was his first night in new lodgings. Mary was disposed of for the time being; and it had been determined between them that she should try on the morrow to recover her old situation. They were going to get married, for pure economy's sake, so soon as that became practicable. The depressing influence which attaches to new places was upon him. He was and had been for years a wanderer, and yet he felt it for once, keenly. There are some who never quite master that depression. I have but once spent an unbroken three months under one roof since I was three-and-twenty, and yet a new abode is always dismal for the first half-hour. The tables are unfriendly; the chairs have a stand-off air; the grave voice of the clock is the voice of a stranger; and the very fire shows new faces.

It is not necessary that a man should have been bred like Bayard to be as chivalrous as he; and Hiram, sitting in his shirt-sleeves on the bedside, and pulling solemnly and slowly at the well-blackened clay, was as full of manly tenderness and stout resolve as he could hold. 'It makes a man sort of fearful and thin-skinned to have a gell to look after,' soliloquised our philosophic hero. 'Can't help thinking what she'd do if I broke down. This city gets a man under, too.—Hiram! Mister Search! Think of what depends on you, and hold your head up and step out firm. That's better. Now, then; into bed you go. Pleasant dreams, Hiram.—Good-night, darlin'. Sleep, my dear little gell, sleep! sleep, and forget your troubles. If I was a chernub, you shouldn't hurt for want of watching.' And Hiram, fairly worn, blew out his candle, laid down the well-blackened clay gingerly on the floor, turned over, and, not unmindful of his Maker, fell asleep.

He was out early in the morning, and began his round. Busy people declined to waste a moment on him. Others with more leisure questioned him, and sent him on again. Some were civil, some were not. It made no difference

to him; he went out at one door and in at another, and ran through his formula with un-failing pluck and cheerfulness. That went on all day from nine in the morning until seven in the evening, and nothing came of it but weariness. He crept home footsore and with a little failing at the heart. If you have 'No' thrown at your head three hundred times running in a single day, you are likely to grow disheartened. Next morning, he began again, and prosecuted his weary task till noon. That frozen monosyllable barred every door with a barrier like ice, until at last he came upon a restaurateur in a little street off the Strand, who offered him a berth as a waiter on condition that he made a deposit of two pounds and gave a satisfactory reference. He gave a reference to the official who had dismissed him, went home and pawned everything but one suit of clothes and his linen, raised the money; and on the following day entered on his new business.

He was not in an exalted sphere of life; but it began in a very short time to pay better than omnibus-conducting. The restaurant was not long opened, and was by no means a high-class concern; but it began in its own way to thrive, and Hiram throve with it. It was in the man's nature to take a pride in whatever he did; and before he had been in the new line a fortnight, he performed conjuring tricks with knives, forks, and plates that were wonderful to look at. Like the proverbial good actor, who lives his part, Hiram threw himself head and heels into the character; and as soon as the funds would allow it, he blossomed forth in an evening suit and a stiff white necktie. The proprietor rallied him a little, and the regular customers chaffed him mildly, on this butterfly leap from the chrysalis garb. He smiled blandly, and the owner of the place began to think he had picked up a jewel. Hiram, as the business of the place improved, received something considerable in the way of tips, and began once more to lay-by money. Then out came from his fictionary uncle's care, Gerard's half-sovereign, and this being drilled, was suspended to the watch-chain which once again hung across Hiram's waistcoat.

He had scarce been invested more than a month, when one day a young gentleman entered sadly, and seating himself, called for a chop and a pint of bitter beer. From the moment of his entry, Hiram fixed his gaze upon him, and when he sat down, walked to his side and awaited his order with a countenance of many emotions. When the order, given with bent head, came to Hiram's ears, his face changed ludicrously. He passed on the demand for the chop with a private signal to the cook to do his best; and having set the pint measure beside the new-comer, he rattled about with knives and forks and water-bottle, keeping a corner of his eye on the guest meanwhile. If his object was to induce him to raise his head, it failed; but when he brought the chop, he succeeded in getting a near look at the stranger's face. There was no other customer there at the moment; and Hiram watched him with a look of evident pity and amazement. The stranger ate his simple meal, and paid for it, and went his way without a glance at the waiter who found him so deeply interesting. Being left to his own devices, Hiram took up a

copy of *The Times* and turned to the advertising columns.

'Yes,' he said under his breath; 'there's no mistake. Eh, dear, now! "Lumby Hall,"' he read, "'ten miles from Brierham, four from Colham, five from Dene." That's where I saw him first and last. Great smash in the City. Supposed gigantic frauds by Mr Garling, Lumby and Lumby. Same name. Comes from same part of the country. Could afford to chuck half-sovereigns about in them days. Come down to taking his meals in a shanty like this. And the man that's ruined him is the father of my little gell. Eh, dear!' And Hiram sighed most piteously, and sat for ten minutes in tragic amaze, until an order for broiled kidneys awoke him from his stupor.

It was indeed Gerard Lumby whom Hiram Search had seen; but Hiram, though he guessed rightly in most respects, had somewhat overleaped the truth in his belief that Gerard was yet so poor that a few pence spent upon luncheon made a difference to him. Amongst his friends—and this episode, since it led to nothing but his meeting with Hiram, may briefly here be mentioned and dismissed—was one who had been a fellow of his college, and now, having married, and thereby resigned his fellowship, had associated himself with a daily journal. There was then, as usual, a disturbance in the East of Europe, the unspeakable Turk and the equally unspeakable Christian of those parts being occupied in recriminatory raids and murders; and Gerard's friend sought him out when he heard of the failure of the firm, and offered him employment as a special correspondent. Gerard leaped at this proposal; and it was to discuss it, that he had come into the street in which the new restaurant was situate. The newspaper offices were only half-a-dozen doors below, on the same side.

The business not having come to a head between the Eastern unspeakables, the journey Gerard meditated was delayed; but he went to the offices daily, and almost daily lunched at the new restaurant. In the simplicity of his mind, Hiram imagined that this was the principal, perhaps the only meal of the young man's day. To suit his fallen fortunes, poor Gerard had sold all his jewellery, and he had become neglectful of his dress. He was not slovenly, but the old precision and nicety had vanished. In the old days, he had carried his head a thought too proudly. He hung it now habitually, and his face was pale. It was no wonder, for his heart was alternate frost and fire; and what with his father's loss of all manly faculty, and his mother's grief, and his own loss of love and fortune all at one fell swoop, such cankering miseries gnawed the poor fellow's soul as were almost too much for humanity to bear. Hiram began to see him daily, with here and there the pause of a day between. To Hiram's imagination, Gerard's occasional absences meant—no dinner. The tough-tender Yankee began to yearn over him and to sorrow for him. He was too delicate—in a word, he was too much a gentleman—to claim acquaintance with his benefactor in these days of fallen fortune; but one day, when Gerard—after a two days' absence this time—took his usual chop and drank water instead of beer for some no-reason, and neglected

to leave behind him the twopence with which he had commonly rewarded the waiter's service, Hiram leaped farther along the mistaken road, and jumped to the conclusion that Mr Gerard Lumby and actual famine were beginning to make acquaintance with each other. So, begging and obtaining an hour's leave of absence, the mistaken one slipped out after Gerard, and dogged him home to chambers in the Temple, where he was staying with an old college chum now called to the bar. Hiram saw him enter by means of a latch-key, and went back again. But that night he wrote upon a little bit of writing-paper in a clerly hand these singular words: 'From a true and grateful friend, who remembers a kindness.' He folded up in the paper a half-crown, and—dropped it into the letter-box, addressed to Gerard Lumby, Esq.

Gerard dined, or lunched, more plenteously next day, and took cheese. Hiram served him almost with tears in his eyes, and that night dropped another half-crown into the letter-box ticketed: 'From the same.' To Gerard's sore heart, these well-intentioned but unnecessary gifts were bitter and enraging, and he asked himself again and again who the base enemy could be who chose so cruel a method of humiliating him in his misery. Sitting in his friend's rooms alone that night, with his own aching thoughts for company, he heard a stealthy footstep ascend the stair. Wrathfully expectant, he arose, drew back the latch of the door, and waited. The third package dropped by the unknown hand fell with a dull little clang into the letter-box. Gerard dashed the door open, and seized a dark retreating figure.

'Come in,' he said, in low tones that boded no good to the captive. 'Let me have a look at you.' The lithe Hiram struggled like an eel; but the vice-like grip only tightened on him; and strong as the Yankee was, the athletic Briton walked him into the room and had him hatless under the gaslight, whilst you could say 'Jack Robinson.'

THREE DAYS IN BRITTANY.

THE train passes through the depths of the forest of Crannon. So thick is the foliage that the branches of the oaks and elms brush against the windows. My friend Davis and I are travelling through Brittany to Cape Finisterre, where lies the little town of Douarnenez. Our eyes catch a glimpse here and there of a moss-grown Druidical stone, an encampment of charcoal-burners, or a hastily retreating rabbit. The forest is passed, and we are crossing a moorland covered with gray rocks. From this high ground we distinguish the indentations of the coast around the harbour of Brest; the sea sparkles in the sun, and to the left is the undulating blue line of the Montagnes Noires. Viaducts are thrown over deep valleys, solitary and savage; beneath, streamlets wind through green meadows, where the small black cows of the country are grazing. There is a melancholy joined to tenderness in these *landes*, or moors, the cause of the homesickness which the inhabitants feel when they leave

them for a time. We are in the wild country of Ar-mor, with its Breton poetry, its solitary manor-houses, its hamlets shaded by trees, and the perfume of the oak forests and the sea.

A long steep street, badly paved, lined with poor shops and blackened façades—such is Douarnenez. A square, where congregate groups of sailors, servants, and peasants, and in the middle of which stands a fountain, cuts the high street in two; and to the right and left, crossing like the meshes of a net, are small outlets, exhaling a penetrating odour of bad fish. We seek our hotel, and find it is a resort for artists, who are just returning for dinner; the men with gaiters up to the knee, a long pole in their hands, and stooping under the weight of their easels. The ladies, dressed in plaids, with hair flying, and limp petticoats, are escorted by boys, who carry their colour-boxes. Pleasant talk beguiles the dinner-hour; and then we find that in the large room belonging to the hotel there is a marriage festival going on, and thither we adjourn.

The young people here all get married, we are told, though the girls in every family are numerous. All are workers. From the earliest age, the crochet-hook or knitting-needle is put into their hands, and they wander on the seashore counting their stitches. At fifteen the poorest go to the *friturerie*, where the sardines are preserved. It is amusing to watch them when they become *sardinieres*, alert and sharp, ready with their sancy replies. They walk down the street at noon in files of five or six, their wooden shoes sounding on the uneven pavement, and gazing at strangers with bursts of laughter. The daughters of the next class work as embroiderers of shawls, or the frontals of altars, and execute flower-garlands on muslin or crape of an astonishing and very original colour. Every one is busy, and wants for nothing. Our hostess, who is a buxom figure, has ten children, five of whom are daughters. Three of these are already married; and the other two, slender and fair, are dancing at the party to-night.

On these occasions, the girls empty their savings-boxes for their adornment. In this long whitewashed room there is a display of toilets such as have rarely been seen. The girls are in white dresses, with muslin or China-crape embroidered shawls. The picturesque cap is of light lace, made up with something like a horn at the back of the head. The white dresses are relieved by silk aprons, with bibs of the most delicate colours—pale blue, sea-green, lilac, and gray mingling with charming grace. We especially noticed one young recently married woman, for the almost eastern luxury of her toilet. A dress of white satin, rose-coloured stockings, ribbon of the same colour round her waist, trimmings embroidered with roses, a muslin shawl and apron, lace head-dress, and silver ornaments. She was pretty as well, with a delicate complexion and fine brown eyes.

The men are much less conspicuous. Their coats are of a very sombre hue, and they wear broad-brimmed hats. The two violinists who formed the orchestra played the old air of the *braille*. The dancers took each other by the hand in files of twelve, and executed a dance of the country known as the *gavotte*. Each file, led by a man, gravely described half-circles in

the form of the letter S. All these garlands of men and women move lightly, crossing, turning, gliding adroitly around each other, and never departing from the most ceremonious gravity. In this country, manners and customs are deeply rooted; nothing has changed; they dance as they did in the days of Louis XIV.

The next day is that of the yearly regatta—a holiday for this little town, where the population live on the sea. The sardine constitutes the riches of Douarnenez. In the days of the Romans they would have consecrated a temple to it; now they are content to carve its image in front of the churches. It reaches this coast in the month of May; from that time to December, eight hundred boats are employed in the sardine fishery, and if the season be good, catch many thousands of fish daily. At the hour of departure, the port presents an animated spectacle. Down the numerous flights of steps the men arrive, carrying their baskets, and wearing cowls of oiled yellow cotton. Their wives, knitting in hand, accompany them to the beach. Provisions, nets, and bait are laid in the bottom of the boat, where each crew consists of a captain, two rowers, two or three fishermen, and a boy. The pulleys creak; the sail is run up; the boats double the point of the jetty; and an hour after, the whole flotilla is out on the sea, and looking no bigger than a flight of swallows.

During the fishing, profound silence is observed. The captain throws out the long net to right and left. The bait, or *rogne*, is composed of the roe of the cod steeped in sea-water. The sardine rushes upon it, and is caught in the meshes, where its silvery scales sparkle. When the net sinks with the weight, two men raise it, and shake it adroitly into the boat, so that the fish falls without being touched—a condition indispensable to its good preservation. When the boats return, the curers who want to buy hoist a flag on the rocks; the captains reply with other well-known signals, and the bargain is concluded before the port is reached.

To-day, the fête has drawn all the multitude to the port. The chances of each boat in the race are eagerly discussed. Compact groups of men and women, peasants and citizens, station themselves round the *mât de cocagne*, or before the orchestra, where the drums are beating their loudest. All the costumes of Brittany are represented—large round hats with velvet ribbon streamers mingle with the muslin *coiffes* of the *sardiniers*, or the gophered frills of Quimper, the hood-like collars of Chateaulin, or the white-winged caps of Cencarnau. Here and there, a man shows his numerous waistcoats embroidered with bright-coloured wools. The women display an oriental love for colour, large yellow or scarlet bodices, sleeves braided with silver, green petticoats bordered with gay flowers. Among them, the children swarm, the girls dressed like little women; the boys covering their fair, curly hair with a blue cap, and showing the bronze skin through the holes of the waistcoat or trousers; bold, quarrelsome, ragged, but handsome, fresh, smiling, with the agility of squirrels, large blue eyes, and rosy cheeks.

Some of these juveniles give themselves up to a game which is dangerous, though lucrative. On board one of the ships, a sail-yard attached

to a mast hangs horizontally over the sea; to this are tied red belts, waistcoats, and cravats. Some urchins astride, others standing on the well-soaped spar, advance slowly to the yard-arm. One turns round half-way; *plouf!* he has fallen into the water; but diving, he reappears at the side of the ship. Another reaches the extremity, chooses a fine red belt, shakes it with an air of triumph, seizes it between his teeth, and plunges head-foremost into the water. In half an hour the yard-arm is bare. But the *gamins* are not tired; they dive for sons, wrapped in white paper, thrown by the spectators, and fight under water for the possession of them. One carries on the game for half an hour, swimming like a frog; he never rests, his eyes starting out of his head, and secreting his coins in one corner of his mouth, crying, 'Have you no more?'

The brass band calls the crowd to the end of the jetty, for the boats have returned, amid loud cries of encouragement, clapping of hands, and altercations as to the winner. We leave the port, and visit the field where they are dancing. Two musicians in Breton costume, long hair, and droll countenances, are perched on a platform, playing on the bagpipes with great energy. At their feet, the sailors and peasants are executing a kind of *gavotte* with great gravity to a monotonous tune. The girls form a circle round them, but do not mingle in the dance; and so the day closes.

The next morning, some acquaintances at the hotel join us, and we hire an omnibus to take us to the Pointe du Raz. The road is steep, till it reaches the high plateaux of the *landes*. The tower of the church of Pont-Croix rises through the trees, and at length we reach Audierne, a dirty, dull, fishing-village. As we advance, the road becomes more arid, the country bare and uninhabited. Trees are rare, so also are houses. As we mount upwards under the hot sun, the blue waves of the bay sparkling like so many diamonds, the corn disappears, to give place to rushes. At Lescoff, the last village before reaching the Pointe, some women are spinning with the distaff outside their huts. We ask them some questions; but they look at us with a frightened air, and disappear quickly under the black porches of their ruinous homes. Numbers of ragged children follow our carriage. Now to the right as well as to the left we see the bright sea, and in the middle of the red heather rises the white tower of the lighthouse. The great voice of the ocean is the only sound, and here are the formidable gray crags of the rocks at Raz, before which the lighthouse stands like a mysterious sentinel. One of the keepers offers to be our guide, for the path is somewhat dangerous. The land recedes from our view; fine pointed rocks are heaped obliquely on one another, leaving but a narrow border of turf between them and the abyss which opens beneath our feet. We advance in Indian file; and to increase our difficulty, the children, naked or ragged, rush in between our feet, climb the rocks like monkeys, and offer us bouquets of fern for a few sous.

All round, an immense space of sea dazzles our eyes. To the left is the extended semicircle bounded by the misty rocks of Pen-March, and the Bay of Audierne spreading its blue waters. To the right, the Bay des Trépassés is encircled by

menacing reefs, and the Pointe de Van stretches out its white promontory. Opposite is the Raz and its dangerous shoals; then the legendary Ile de Sein, a piece of land lying so low that the waves seem as if they would engulf it. No traces of human life; not a sail in the wide horizon of waters, nothing but the continual roar of the waves and the sharp cries of the gulls sweeping round the rocks. It is the end of terrestrial life, the beginning of a wild and solitary infinity. Our guide leads us by a narrow path at the edge of the rocks to the Enfer de Plogoff, as dangerous as its name denotes. We sometimes lie down on our faces, and creep between blocks; or place one foot on ledges the size of the hand, or descend the irregular steps formed in the stony crevasses. But when we reached the granite gulf, we felt recompensed by seeing the formidable assaults of the waves against the dripping rocks which form the walls of the abyss. They rush from all sides through channels worn in the interior of the Pointe, meeting and beating furiously with the sound of thunder. The dark billows boil as if in a magic caldron, throwing up vertical spouts, which scatter into sheets of white foam; and then, as a contrast to this deep shade and fearful noise, we gaze upwards to a serene blue sky and a bright sun shining over us.

The ascent is less perilous than the descent. At the end of a quarter of an hour, we are on the edge of the bay, where we perceive the Lake of Laonal, separated from the sea by a narrow strip of land. We are told the legend of the city of Is. On the site of the present lake, there stood in the fifth century a fabulous city, the Sodom of old Armorica. The fishermen who ply their craft on its still waters see the palace and towers in ruin beneath. King Gradlon reigned over it, defended, as it then was, against the inroads of the ocean by high banks with a strong sluice. The silver key that opened it was always hung round the king's neck. The reigning beauty at court was the Princess Dahut, Gradlon's daughter, with long tresses that shone like gold. She reigned over all hearts, as her father did over the sea; but she was herself the slave of her own passions, and her conduct made her a public scandal. The old monarch alone shut his eyes against the errors of an only child. One night the demon that possessed her suggested that she should steal the key and open the sluice. But St Guennolé appeared to the king in his sleep, and cried: 'Gradlon, make haste to save yourself, for Dahut has opened the sluice, and the sea is pouring into the city.' The good man, filled with a father's pity, refused to mount his horse unless his daughter would also ride on the croup; and loaded with this dangerous burden, he galloped out of the gates. Just at that moment a fearful roar sounded behind them. The great city of Is was overwhelmed by the rushing wave. In terror, the king rode all night, followed by the menacing waters. In the morning, when near Douarnenez, he heard a voice, saying: 'Gradlon, if you do not wish to be lost, throw over the demon who rides on your croup.' Dahut, terrified by the fearful noise, lost her balance, and rolled over into the stream, which stopped as soon as she was engulfed. The place is still called Dahut's Pit, now corrupted into Poul-Davit. We discuss the legend as we get into our carriage. It is the old story of the

siren with golden hair and the voice of the charmer, fatal to all those who listen.

It is seven o'clock before we reach Audierne. The quay, so deserted this morning, is now gay; the fishing-boats have returned; and the visitors, English and French, are on the shore. Delighted, but very weary, we regain our hospitable quarters to enjoy a good supper.

The next day we take a charming walk to the Valley of the Rix. Every step gives you a fresh surprise. Through the splendid trees, you see the sparkling bay; cottages with moss-covered roofs are scattered along; the women in their white coifs are busy washing at the fountains, and talking incessantly. Wild-flowers grow abundantly, and the red-throats sing their sweet notes. We reach a long avenue of ancient moss-grown oaks; at the end is a ruinous wall, covered with ferns, and an arched doorway with a sculptured escutcheon. Within, are farm-buildings in every stage of decay. It is the old manor of Keratry, compared with which, the melancholy dwelling of the Master of Ravenswood was a palace. The ancient family of Beaumanoir once lived here; and as we wandered through the garden, now a wild uncultivated scene, we thought of the days when the fair ladies used to come out in the evening and gather the roses and honeysuckles that are still flowering amidst the weeds.

We climb a hill, from which we see the country. There are manor-houses on all sides—Kerillis, Kerdouarnec, Coat-an-aer, buried in groves of oak or chestnut. It would seem as if, like the Breton peasants, the better classes wished to hide themselves from the eyes of strangers; and if you would get nearer, you must plunge into secluded roads, overshadowed by lofty trees, whence you can see the gray tower of a pigeon-cot, and hear the inhospitable barking of many fierce dogs. Issuing from one of these, we enter a solemn, winding alley of aspen-trees, leading to the church of Ploa-Ré. The grass, strewn with the whitening foliage of the trees, rustles under our tread. It was a quarter of an hour before we reached the end of these severe rows of trees; and the sight of the cemetery made us all melancholy. Upon the whole, that is the impression which Brittany leaves upon the mind. The great silent tracts without culture or villages; the dark deep forests; the brooks, which issue from every quarter, sobbing and moaning; the grave, wild peasants, who speak an unknown language, and distrust the stranger—all these things act upon the nervous organisation. It is like a melancholy mist falling drop by drop, yet penetrating to the very heart.

PLAYING THE WRONG CARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

THE host of the *King's Arms* was as good as his word; in a very few minutes supper was ready; and, moreover, it was a supper which did the *King's Arms* credit. The next day being market-day, was probably a reason for the larder being unusually well stocked; while the presence and guarantee of Mr Hythe of Myrtle Villa was certainly a reason for drawing upon the best of that larder's resources. John and William, the

well-known first and second waiters, were in attendance; but on Mr Hythe expressing his wish to that effect, they retired, and the party began supping in earnest.

As might be expected, there was but little conversation at first, what little there was being contributed by the founder of the feast, even his remarks sinking after a while to a very low key, and then chiefly addressed to the Professor. Civility of course demanded an assenting monosyllable now and again; but it was plain that the Professor's attention was mainly directed to his supper; yet a change came over him anon; he looked uneasily at the speaker, glanced meaningly at his companions; then laying down his knife and fork, he said, in as low a tone as he had been addressed: 'If you will be good enough to wait a few minutes, sir, until we get rid of the child, I think it will be better. I understand you pretty well.'

Mr Hythe nodded assent; and the Professor resumed his meal, although with a more troubled aspect than before. His companions looked wonderingly on during this whispered colloquy, without speaking, until presently the Professor said: 'Now, sir; with your permission, I will give Mademoiselle Lucile one glass of champagne, and then call the baggage-man to take her to our lodgings; for, as you will readily guess, we do not put up at the *King's Arms*; and I do not care about her keeping very late hours.'

'If you prefer it, I will order her a room here,' said Hythe in an undertone. 'She will surely be very dull in going to a strange house by herself—will be nervous.'

'Oh, she don't mind!' exclaimed Regaldini with a smile, though there was sadness in it. 'In our life, sir, children soon grow out of the nervous fancies you are thinking about. The real hardships of life kill the fanciful ones, and they get enough of them, poor creatures!'

So the attendant was summoned, and was directed to take the little girl to Mrs Blimpy's, Back Church Row; a very different address from the Market Place or High Street.

When he had fairly gone, Hythe desired the others to select their wine, light their cigars, and make themselves comfortable. 'And that you may be more at ease in a business point of view,' he continued, 'I will make up your losses of to-day, on your giving me a fair statement; as I have always been a supporter of—of music and the drama, I suppose I must say.'

'You are very good, sir; indeed I do not know how to thank you,' said the Professor; 'for this most awful frost—I mean this failure—has fairly broken us. How we should have reached the next town, I don't know; or how we should have opened when we got there, I don't know either.'

'Have you settled for the room?' began Hythe.

The other interrupted him with a laugh. 'Settled! I should think we had, sir,' he said. 'You don't think the landlord here would run any risk? I wanted him to appoint some one to take the money, and so pay himself; but he said that was not in his line. He knew the town; I didn't. But, sir, you were speaking of some business in which you thought I could serve

you. Now the child is gone, you may speak out.'

'But—you see it was private,' began Hythe.

'And so it will be now, I guarantee,' interposed the Professor. 'I will answer for Charley—that's my friend—and so would you, if you knew him. Besides, I fancy the business will be more in his line than my own, if I correctly caught your meaning.'

Hythe hesitated a few seconds, as though rather disconcerted at having to confide in two persons instead of one; but shaking off this reluctance, began: 'Seeing the ease with which you assumed character after character, each so widely differing from the others, Mr Regaldini, and the wonderful manner in which you concealed your identity, it occurred to me that you might, at little trouble to yourself, do a great service to a near relative of my own, who is gradually sinking into fixed melancholy, if not insanity, by dwelling on a fixed idea—a delusion. Now, there will not be the slightest risk to yourself, as you will see, and you will be well paid for your kindness; I ought, perhaps, to say "for your talent," as I have no doubt your kindly feeling would prompt you to serve an unfortunate gentleman disinterestedly. I have a brother, Mr Regaldini.'

'Excuse me, sir,' interrupted the Professor; 'but now that we are coming to business, I should take it as a favour if you would call me "Styles," which is my name, the other being only professional.'

'Certainly, Mr Styles,' assented Hythe. 'And your friend?'

'Well, he really is a foreigner,' said Styles; 'but not with such a name as we have given him. If you call him Mr Charles, that will do, and indeed that's what his name means.—Now, sir, we are at your service.'

The musician had scarcely spoken a single word in Mr Hythe's hearing, but had listened intently. 'My brother, gentlemen,' proceeded Mr Hythe, 'labours under an increasing remorse for a wrong which he thinks he did many years ago; and despite of all argument to prove how unavailing this morbid regret and self-reproach now is, he gives way to it more and more. Nay, so completely has the feeling possessed him, that he will alienate his property from his real family, or at anyrate postpone their possession of it for many years, and even then they will only share it with some charitable institution. My children and I are the family I refer to, gentlemen. You see I treat you with perfect frankness, as I am not a man to do things by halves; and having said this, you will not wonder when I say it is worth my while to give a twenty-pound note, in addition to all expenses and losses, which latter I will settle at once, in order to get the business to which I allude done, and well done.'

The attention of the listeners became keener after this sentence, and Mr Styles involuntarily hitched his chair a little closer to the speaker, as though anxious not to lose a word.

'My brother'—Mr Hythe hesitated a little here, as though he knew that this was the key-stone of his communication—'my brother, early in life, while on his travels, was entangled, as many young men before him have been, by a certain intimacy. He says now that he was married; but that I believe to be a

delusion. However, to adopt his own fancy, he was abroad with his wife, and becoming ashamed, I suppose, of the connection, he—he left her; left her with one child. He was under another name at the time; there is no doubt of that; but he heard of his father's death while he was abroad, and so was anxious to come home to take his property, and not anxious, as you may suppose, to bring home the half-bred foreigner—a Brazilian, or Bolivian, or something of that kind. So he left her.—You follow me so far?’

‘Yes, sir; all right!’ said Styles.

‘Yes, sir; there is no mistake about what your brother did,’ said the musician, speaking for the first time. He spoke with a strong foreign accent, which slightly distorted his words, but he spoke readily enough. ‘Serve the foreign person right, for being such a fool.’

‘Ah! well, I won’t say exactly that,’ returned Hythe, speaking compassionately on behalf of the foreigner. ‘It was not handsome on his part; but there was great excuse for him. He left her all the money he could spare. But after he came home, his previous infatuation returned, and acted upon him so strongly that he positively went back to where he had left her—New Orleans.’

‘New Orleans!’ echoed the musician. ‘I beg your pardon, sir, but I follow you with great interest.’ So he probably did, for his thin, eager face was thrust forward, and his sunken eyes gleamed so brightly under the ragged hair which hung over his forehead and around his head, that Hythe felt almost uncomfortable when he encountered their glance.

‘But he could not find her,’ resumed Hythe; ‘yet he heard of her, unfortunately. He heard a great deal of exaggeration, no doubt, about her despair at being left; but that would not have mattered so much, only that he heard also of her having been robbed by those around her, and left with her child almost penniless. She had gone away from New Orleans; and it was supposed she had tried to reach her friends—an attempt almost hopeless, as they were said to live hundreds of miles away; where, my brother never exactly knew. His mind perhaps was a little affected by some irregularities and exciting adventures in which he had been a partaker. Whatever the cause, this incident preyed on him greatly. He returned to England, led the life of a hermit, kept out of society, and made no secret to me that he did not consider himself at liberty to marry, having a belief that his wife—as he called her—was still alive. We—I—well, his family were naturally satisfied with this arrangement; but a few years ago he had a dream—he talks of it as a vision, a revelation—in which he saw his wife and child.’—

‘This child—was it a girl or a boy?’ asked the musician.

‘A girl,’ replied Hythe. ‘Well, he thought he saw them, and they told him the child was still alive, and would live to see him. On the strength of this dream, he has altered his will to the detriment of his friends, as I have told you; and as a delusion gets the stronger, the longer it is indulged in, you will not be in the least surprised to hear that he has had the dream again very recently indeed, and to the same effect.’

‘But how do you wish us to help you?’ asked Mr Styles, as the speaker paused. ‘I think you said.’—

‘I am coming to that now,’ resumed Mr Hythe; ‘but it was necessary to enter upon this rather lengthy preamble, that you might understand precisely how things were. I want some one to personate a relative of this young woman; her brother indeed. I have told you she was a foreigner; consequently her relatives were foreigners also; and coming as she did from some precious South American republic, or some such out-of-the-way place, there is not likely to be any one in England who can say you are or are not her brother. I have by me a photograph of the young fellow. I had copies taken, unknown to my brother, from one in his possession, as I thought it might come in handy some day. Now, making yourself up as much like this man as you can, allowing of course for the lapse of ten or a dozen years, you wait upon Mr Maurice Hythe, say you have come over to England on other business, but called to deliver a message you had held in charge for several years’—

‘Pardon, sir,’ interrupted the musician; ‘but you have told us that this gentleman was under another name, a name of assumption. If that is so, he will say, quite natural, how do you know where I live—how do you know me at all?’

‘Hum!—yes; that’s true,’ returned Hythe thoughtfully. ‘I must think it over. But I fancy I see a way out of the difficulty; so we will proceed. When you have introduced yourself, you must speak to him of your sister; say that when he left her, she sought refuge with an old lover to whom she was greatly attached, and telling him that she was left a widow, induced him to marry her; that she lived with him several years, until both she and her daughter died of fever, or cholera, or something.’

‘Very good, sir; most good,’ said the musician, as Hythe paused to pour out a glass of wine. ‘The idea is excellent. It will be easy to defame her character. Besides, being dead, and only a foolish girl when alive, why, it does not matter.’

Hythe cast a doubtful look at the speaker, as though there was something in this mode of support which jarred upon him.

‘This communication,’ he continued, ‘which I have no hesitation in saying—knowing my brother’s character—will be implicitly received as authentic, will at once and for ever settle all this delirium about dreams and visions.’

‘I have heard of some such plan, when a man thought himself haunted by a ghost,’ said Styles; ‘they got some one to represent the ghost, and’—

‘Ah! this is not at all like that,’ hastily interrupted Hythe. ‘My brother does not believe himself haunted, and you will not have to personate any one he has ever seen. You can come with me to my house to-night, Mr Styles, and I will give you the portrait of the man you are to personate.’

‘I can’t do it, sir—I can’t indeed,’ said Styles; ‘my nerves are gone, sir. What with continual ill-luck, and five-and-thirty years of this life,

and—I must own—some hard drinking of late, I haven't the nerves for such work. That's why I told you to take Charley into consultation. He is wonderful good at all disguises, and I don't believe he's afraid of anybody or anything in the world.'

'But I was so struck by your cleverness to-night,' urged Hythe, 'that I thought you were just the man; while Mr Charles here, if that be his name, cannot have had much experience.'

'Bless you, sir!' returned Styles, with a melancholy smile, 'what you saw me do, is more habit and knack. All the tricks are handed down from one showman to another; there's not a spark of originality in the business. As for Charley's experience! if he chooses to do it, sir, he can alter his face while he is sitting there, so that you could hardly know him.—Couldn't you, Charley?' In lieu of answering in words, the musician bowed his head for a moment, ran his hand hastily through his wild hair, altered his necktie, then suddenly lifting his face, thrust it forward towards Mr Hythe, with so fearful a grin, and so terrible an expression in his eyes, that the gentleman half leaped from his chair with an exclamation of alarm.

'Aha!' cried Styles; 'has he changed his expression, sir?'

'Changed his expression!' echoed Mr Hythe. 'I never was so startled in my life. I would sooner have found myself face to face with a mad wolf or a tiger.—I do not know whether you will take it as a compliment, Mr Charles, but I assure you I never saw so hideous a face on human shoulders before. I don't want any further proof of your power.'

Styles laughed at this speech; so did Charley; but whether the latter intended the grin to be in keeping with his wolfish aspect or not, it certainly made Hythe shudder again, and cast a second look, to assure himself that the musician had not gone suddenly mad.

'You are satisfied then, sir?' asked Styles. 'I can tell you there is not a man in the profession who could have made such a change without paint or dress, as Charley has just done.'

'I should think not,' said Hythe, with emphasis; 'I may almost say I hope not. I should have preferred you, I must own, Mr Styles; but after what you have said, I have no choice except to take Mr Charles.—It will be as well, sir,'—addressing the musician—'to come with me at once to my house, which is only on the outskirts of the town, and I will give you the photograph.'

'We will both go,' struck in Styles; 'a walk will do me good, and Lucile is asleep by this time.'

'Then your daughter's name is really what you call it,' said Hythe, with a smile. 'I did not feel certain of that, as I must say you allow yourself a good deal of latitude in your selection of names.'

'The public will have it, sir,' replied Styles, very seriously. 'If we were to keep to our own names, or were particular about countries and propriety, and all that, we should not draw a penny. But Mademoiselle is not my daughter; she is not related to me; she is a relative of

Charley's,' he continued, dropping his voice—the musician was putting on his coat at the further end of the room. 'He does not like to talk about her before strangers, yet he dotes upon her, though he don't show it, and would kill anybody, or himself, or her either, rather than she should come to any harm. He is a strange fellow, he'—

The musician coming towards them at this moment, Mr Styles abruptly checked himself, and after a brief conversation bearing upon the financial result of the entertainment, the three left the *King's Arms* in company.

Very little was spoken among them on the road to Myrtle Villa; Hythe and 'Mr Charles' were evidently absorbed in reflection; while Styles, who would possibly have been more loquacious if left to himself, was overawed by the silence of his companions, and conscious perhaps of having drunk sufficient wine to render loquacity dangerous. The inmates of Myrtle Villa had retired; but Mr Hythe opened the front-door with his key, and took the others into what was apparently his own room. Here he unlocked a desk, and taking from it a packet of photographs, selected one which he threw towards Charles. 'You will find his name on the back of it,' he said.—'Don't Something. You of course pretend to be him. Do you think you can "make up" anything in his style?'

'That he can!' exclaimed Styles, who was looking at the picture over the musician's shoulder; 'he will do it to perfection, for he has just got the face for it.—Charley, my boy! if the part had been written for you, it could not have suited you better.'

'There is one thing, Mr Hythe, which we must not at all forget,' said the musician; 'he was still looking at the portrait, and he spoke in so low a voice that, his head being bowed, he could hardly be heard; 'I cannot arrange without knowing this gentleman's other name. How can I go and see Mr Hythe, when you tell me he travelled as Mr Somebody-else? You said you would think over that. There is no other way but telling me this name.'

'No—I suppose not,' slowly returned Hythe. 'I have been turning it over in my mind a good deal since we spoke, and I see it would be absurd for you to go on such an errand and not know his assumed name. However, I expect he will be too excited to ask how you found him out. Say, will you undertake the business? You understand the pay.'

'I will undertake it, sir,' said the musician, lifting his head suddenly. His dark, sallow face was almost of an ashy paleness, and although the vicious tiger-like expression was not there, there was something so unearthly in his look, that Mr Hythe recoiled with an ejaculation which was almost of terror. 'I will undertake it, sir,' said Charles; 'and shall be quite satisfied to leave all question of pay to yourself. I trust you will say I have done my work thoroughly, when that work is finished. I shall be ready to-morrow. Will that suit?'

'Yes; the sooner the better,' returned Mr Hythe. 'You are sure to find him at home—that is one comfort.'

A short consultation then took place, in which Hythe gave some further advice as to the pro-

ceedings of Mr Charles, and then the two professionals took their departure.

'A clever man, no doubt, and will just suit the business,' muttered Hythe, standing at his door, while he watched his confederates as they crossed a patch of moonlight and then disappeared in the shadow of some buildings. 'A very clever man; but I think if I had known as much of him when I began, as I know now, I would not have had anything to do with him. A foolish prejudice, I daresay; but it seems as if I were in partnership with a hyena.'

PAVEMENT PORTRAITS.

A MAN IN POSSESSION.

THE original of this Portrait was first encountered by the painter of it at a sculptor's studio at Hampstead. To this studio at that time—ah, years ago!—used to come on Saturday afternoons a number of young men, who—the week's sculpturing, painting, writing, reading, or work of any sort done—were wont to gather together for fencing, boxing, smoking, and talking purposes. What a merry gathering it was! How we 'turned to mirth all things of earth' in our thoughtless careless youth! and with what paternal dignity the grave old sculptor—not really old, but old in comparison with us—to whom the studio belonged, enjoyed our merri-ment; applauded the skill of some of us; laughed at the awkwardness of others; encouraged a smart talker, or boxer, or fencer; deprecated a loose expression; censured a false cut or blow; and played the rôle of gentle Mentor, ruler and umpire of the games.

All are scattered now and fled;
Some are married, some are dead.

But although these sad words do apply in a general way to members of that weekly gathering, there is among those who survive, one at least who is as sprightly, as active, as gay apparently, as in the days of yore. Age has not silvered his locks, for what there was of them in the old days were white as snow then. Time has not bent his figure, which always put to shame in its uprightness the rounded shoulders of some of his youthful play-fellows. Years have not dimmed his eyes, in which laughter lives now as then. The wrinkles in his good-humoured face are not more numerous than they were, for I never remember his face capable of accommodating more than were already there. His moustache is as fierce and thick, his 'imperial' as heavy, as they always were, and the only change in this Portrait is in his clothes. These, it must be admitted, have grown very shabby. It looks to me as if the same frock-coat which did duty in the studio does duty now, and it is not in the nature of things that a coat should not age with the rolling years, however well the wearer of it may wear.

It was always the feature of the afternoon when 'Young Dick,' as this Portrait was called in the boxing-days, made his appearance at our rendezvous. 'Here he is!' was the general cry; and we all did our best with the gloves, or the

foils, or at singlestick after his arrival; for he was our Professor, not a paid tutor, but a happy honorary master in the cunning and noble arts. That was really his profession, as an inscription on a wire-blind in the window of a dingy white house at Holloway informed the public of the north of London. He made a fair living at his calling. He worked hard; and his one afternoon a week of thorough relaxation was on Saturday, when he came to the studio. His fund of information was wonderful; and when our more active amusements were finished, we would gather round 'Young Dick,' and listen long to tales of his travels 'from China to Peru,' told in a charming manner, and enlivened with flashes of real wit.

'Young Dick' disappeared from my life when the studio days—as all days do—came to an end; and I had nearly forgotten his existence, when a little while ago, he almost knocked me down as he dashed round the corner of Wellington Street, Strand, flying apparently before a blast which was desolating Waterloo Bridge of its dust.

'Hul-lo! Well, I never! Here's luck! How are you, old fellow? This is too much! What an age it is! Why, you're looking well. Come along—no refusal—do as you're told. "Short's" is the word—What's it to be? Not turned teetotaler, eh? Port or sherry—both are good over there? Come over at once, before we both subside under our feelings.'

His arm was slipped through mine, and I at once noticed the very seedy coat. The jerky exclamations were still jumping through his lips, and I had hardly time to reply to one of his questions, ere I found myself with 'Young Dick' in the wine-shop over the way which he had indicated by the word 'Short's.' Here we surveyed each other from head to foot; and here we talked; and here I heard of the change which had really occurred in the existence of this Portrait, whose manner and outward appearance—always barring the clothes—were so unaltered. Over our glass of sherry, poor 'Young Dick' became quite confidential; and this is what he told me, and how he told it.

'Seen any of the old lot lately? I never see any of them now, though. I heard how poor Howse and his brother died of consumption. Sad that; two promising careers cut short. And how Beach married, and hasn't a halfpenny to bless himself with. Turned photographer; began on an acre of canvas, and now finishing up on a square inch of muddy metal—for he goes in for "ferrotypes"—I think he calls them. And how Riley went to the bad, and married a rich old widow. How famous Mew is becoming as a doctor; and what a stir young Stone is making with his writings. That's about all I know of them. I suppose they've all forgotten me—all except old Jupiter Tonans, the ruler of our games. I have reason to know he remembers me. Do you ever hear them speak of Young Dick?'

I thought I noticed a sign of deep feeling in a certain quiver of the lower lip as he asked this question, a quiver which vanished like a bubble in his glass as I replied: 'O dear, yes. Indeed, they've not forgotten you. As far as I know, you are the best remembered of the whole lot.'

Then he laughed—not a hollow laugh, or a mocking laugh, but a laugh as if a joke had occurred to him, amusing him so much that he needs must laugh. 'Ha! ha! I wonder what they would all say if they knew what I am now? I don't want them to know; but I won't ask you to keep it a secret, for some day one of them might find out in an unpleasant way what I am. Why, my dear sir, I'm a man in possession!'

'What!' I exclaimed; 'a broker's man, you?'

'Yes, that's me. When there's no regular work to do for the Court—the "Bankruptcy," you know—I take any odd job of the sort. I don't like it; but as Marwood, that other executioner, says, somebody must do it; and as my wife and children can't, or shan't starve, why, I must do something. I'll tell you all about it.

'A long while ago I broke my arm. This threw me out of my profession for a good while; and when I did try to take it up again, I found that my profession had chucked me up. A friend of mine in the Bankruptcy Court had to settle my affairs, and when that was done, there was nothing but six open mouths and six empty stomachs left. The friend who helped to "white-wash" me offered me a qucer berth, which in sheer desperation I took. I go "into possession," sometimes for the Court, to guard goods against too rapacious creditors; and sometimes for a rapacious creditor, in which latter case I always am as gentle as I possibly can be. It isn't very nice; but on occasions I have funny cases to attend to. There was one the other week. A young artist—a silly but nice fellow—having taken a house far too big and expensive for him, very shortly came a cropper, and I was "put in." Well, I hadn't been there many hours, when a whole troop of his friends came to see him, thinking to enjoy themselves in this grand big house. I let them all in. My host wasn't at home. I told them so. They didn't seem to mind this, but asked for some whisky. I told them there was none. They were surprised, and begged me to go out and get them some. Then I had to tell them what I was. They all roared, as they exclaimed: "What, in possession! We thought you were the new butler!"

'But last Monday I had a shock. You must know I have a nephew, the only son of a dear dead sister, who has been the pride of my life; so good, so respectable, so flourishing. And strange as it may seem to him and his wife and family, I have always appeared the same—good, respectable, flourishing. Whenever I went to his house, I always put on my best clothes and manners; and they in their turn put the best dinner they could upon the table, and gave me the warmest welcome. He is a clerk in the City; has a very good place, and has hitherto done well. Not saved, but lived comfortably, just within his means. Judge, then, of my horror, when last Monday I was sent for by one of my employers and instructed to go and take possession of No. — Old Kent Road—my nephew's house! What could it mean? I thought the matter over; and as soon as I was calm enough to make a definite plan, I accepted the job! I went home and wrote poor Walter a note, saying I was coming to see him the following day; and on Tuesday I dressed myself as smart as possible,

and went, just as if I had come to pay them one of my ordinary visits.

'I found the house as tidy as ever, the children as cheerful; Walter and his wife, apparently, as pleased to see me as they always were. We had dinner; and Walter, his wife, a neighbour, and I played whist afterwards—threepenny points. I lost five shillings, I am glad to say; and Walter did, what he had never done before, made a revoke. It grew late. The neighbour went. I said I would like to smoke another pipe. Walter, who never went to bed early, seemed pleased at this, though he was at this period rather *distrain*—said the revoke he had made worried him. His wife went to bed. The night was passing. Suddenly I feigned great fatigue—you know I could not go away—and begged that I might sleep on the sofa. There was no spare bed ready; so Walter having made me as comfortable as possible, left me, and went up to his own room. I didn't sleep much, I can tell you. I took my boots off, and walked up and down and round and round that little room all night. The chairs, the tables, the books, all seemed to rebuke me. The carpet was like red-hot ploughshares to my feet. The sofa would not accommodate my aching bones. The gas grew hazy as I looked at it through that long night, and the clock striking every quarter of an hour seemed to shriek at me to go. It was awful.

'At last Wednesday morning came. Walter came down. He looked quite ill in the early morning light; but his care was all for me. He expressed great anxiety for my health. He bade me stay for the day. He offered to get me a doctor. I accepted the invitation to remain, and refused the doctor.

'Walter went to his work; and no sooner had the door shut, than his pretty little wife, without a word of warning, burst into tears, and flinging herself on the sofa, sobbed out: "O Uncle Dick, those horses have ruined my Walter! I must tell you. He's been so misled. He's lost all his money, and borrowed a fearful lot, which he can never repay, and we are in daily expectation of a man being put in possession."

'The crisis had come, and this gentle little creature had to bear the brunt of it. I, the respectable uncle, to whom this heart-rending confession was made in a way which clearly showed me that the poor thing thought her revelation would produce help, had to reveal why I was really there! It was done somehow. A series of fainting-fits ensued. Men don't faint; I wish they did; for I certainly should have availed myself then of the privilege, if it had been mine. I wanted to faint away altogether, and never come back.

'When my niece was better, I got up, and having given her a kiss which would not have made Othello himself wince to see, I cut away as hard as my feet would carry me.

'I went to Walter's office to-day, and heard that he had made a clean breast of it to his employers. They have advanced sufficient to help him out of his scrape. He has forsworn racing; and I—well, it will be a long while before I set eyes on that family again—and I've lost that employer.

'Good-bye, old chap. Glad to have seen you. It's a funny world, isn't it?' And with something

like a stoppage in his throat, 'Young Dick' seized my hand, squeezed it hard, and in another moment was out of sight, swallowed up in the stream of humanity pouring along the Strand.

A PET TROUT.

It is, I believe, somewhat unusual for a trout to live, grow, and flourish in a small tank; still more uncommon, perhaps, that a fish of this species should become as tame as the individual in my possession. He lives in a small rockwork cistern in an unheated conservatory attached to my house. He was placed there, I believe, by the preceding tenant in 1879, together with a number of other small fry of his kind. At Michaelmas 1879, when I took the house, I found that by cannibalism or other causes the trout were reduced to three, of which the largest—the subject of this note—was about the size of one's forefinger. Before the end of the following spring, our friend, like the survivor of the *Nancy Bell*, and by similar means, had effectually disposed of his two companions; and since then, has lived in solitary state, save on one occasion, when some unfortunate small fish—roach or gudgeon—happened to get in from an adjoining compartment of the tank. On them he promptly dined.

The division of the aquarium in which he resides measures seven feet in length, fifteen inches in depth, and eighteen inches in average breadth. He is monarch, therefore, of about eighty gallons of water. For a few hours each day, but not regularly, this is renewed by a small fountain which plays in the centre of the tank.

Until last spring, I must confess that I paid scant attention to my finny friend. I could not approve his too great liking for his own species, and it had not dawned upon me that I could possibly make a pet of him. How he existed, is a matter of physiological interest. Occasionally during the warmer weather, some one or other of us would toss a chance spider or earthworm into the tank, and these the trout would supplement by a fly or two caught on his own account. But during the severe weather of 1879-80, and again in the winter of 1880-81, the whole tank-water was for weeks, to all appearance, a solid block of ice; certainly it was so thick that we could not possibly break it. My man tells me that for a period of five weeks consecutively during the latter winter the tank was covered in every part by a sheer ice-sheet—not a crack or air-hole anywhere to be seen. I felt certain that the fish must all be dead, and was considerably astonished to find—as soon as the thaw allowed us to remove the ice—that not one in any of the compartments was, as far as one could judge, a whit the worse. (I should say, however, that some very large goldfish which survived the ice of the winter 1879-80, died one by one in 1880, when the warmer weather of spring set in.) It goes without saying that not a drop of water flowed into the tanks during the whole of the severe weather.

Up to the spring of 1881, the trout had made scarcely any progress in his growth; but during the summer, he had so developed that he measured seven and a half or eight inches in length. This

may in part be attributed to the tremendous petting which he received. His survival of the winter and his tameness made him in a small way a local celebrity.

Not only has he since feasted continually upon the peculiarly fat and well-to-do spiders with which my garden abounds, but visitors have come to see him, armed with boxfuls of web-spinners hunted out from cellars and elsewhere for the occasion. Not that our friend would accept indiscriminately whatever was offered to him. On the contrary, when spiders—his favourite and usual food—were abundant, he would disdain lanky and attenuated specimens, for which at the present date (November 1881), when choice spiders are scarce, he is only too grateful. Similarly, he would reject a whitish spider, which I occasionally offered him; light-coloured spiders indeed, as a rule, he took less readily than dark. Nor was he very partial to spiders which had been confined in boxes. He had a decided preference for those freshly caught. Spiders, when you shut them up together, devote themselves to each other's extermination with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause. Whether angry passions evoked acrid juices, or whether the survivors fell short of his standard of liveliness, is uncertain, but Mr Trout clearly showed his disapprobation of them.

His favourite morsels were certain juicy females of large size, abundant in summer and autumn. He would take a dozen to twenty of these in rapid succession, rising at them as I dangled them from the tip of my finger. Moths and various kinds of flies were occasionally offered, and he generally took them; with bright-coloured or hairy caterpillars, he would have nothing to do. Yet his voracity was very great, and I have seen him dash at a white-handled penknife with which a friend of mine was endeavouring to remove a wasp which had fallen into the water. Wasps, by the way, I believe he never attempted to take, although they occasionally fell into the tank by accident, or were put there unknown to me. I am inclined to think, from some remains I saw floating on the water, that he once or twice devoured portions of a humble-bee. I do not feel sure of this, though. He is partial to earthworms, but will sometimes refuse them for a spider. He swallows his food voraciously and almost immediately. When he seizes an earthworm too large to be so summarily disposed of, he will rush up and down his tank at great speed. Dead things he avoids, and generally waits for some movement of his victim before he advances upon it.

His manner of taking his prey varies. If the insect sinks in the water, he quietly swims up to it, seizes it, then turns round and returns to his lurking-place. Sometimes he takes the food before it reaches the bottom of the tank; at others he picks it off the gravel which forms the bed of the aquarium; but there is never any hurry. It is however, very different, when the bait lies on the surface or hangs suspended above the water. Then he comes with a rush and splash, making nervous people 'jump,' especially when—as is frequently the case—they are peering over with noses down, declaring they 'cannot see anything.' This rush is not the result of fear or trepidation, but arises from his knowledge

—instinctive, if you like—that, while beneath the surface, an earthworm, or spider, or anything not a fish, can be captured at leisure, there is no such certainty as to things above the water. He seems to be aware that they may elude him or take wing, unless he is very sharp. So far from feeling any fear, he will always, when hungry, and seeing me at the edge of his tank, come out from his favourite lurking-place, and place himself immediately below the outstretched hand in which I hold the expected spider, waiting till I let it fall. Sometimes he executes a preliminary flourish up and down the tank.

Curiously, he appears to know me, and will certainly and unmistakably prefer to take food from my hand than from that of a stranger. By dangling a spider a considerable distance above the water, I have several times made my pet leap entirely out of the water, and very curious it has been to observe his pink spots and silver scales so close to one. In rising thus at objects above the water, he takes a half-turn round from right to left in the act of seizing the object, bringing his belly uppermost, and falling into the water beyond almost flat on his back, when the leap has been a high one. This turning to grasp his prey is shark-like; but he does not turn over when seizing a worm or insect *below* the surface. When the object lies *on* the water, his rush is too rapid and his body too indistinct, to enable me to say positively whether he turns or not. As a rule, I think he does not.

He has three favourite stations in his tank; and from the first two which I shall mention he rarely stirs, lying there for hours, a dark object, his white mouth opening and shutting as he forces the water through his gills. The first is underneath the leaves of a Cape pondweed which grows out of a flower-pot sunk in the water—and round which, by the way, he commonly takes a triumphal swim, after receiving a more than usually luscious spider, never failing, however, to present himself again for another of the same sort. His second post, more favoured since the pondweed has died down, is underneath a miniature rock-work bridge which spans the water. Here he lies, as a rule, on the gravelly bottom, with his body closely applied to the stone-work side of the aquarium, accommodating his tail to the curved direction which the tank has at this point. When inclined to feed, however, he rises midway to the surface, and there waits his opportunity.

His third post is somewhat of a puzzle to me. It is the only point in which he displays any shyness; and he invariably dashes from this part of the tank with a great splutter the very moment I enter the conservatory—rushing, nevertheless, to the spot at which I generally feed him, and taking his spiders very much as usual. The post in question is at the very surface of the water at one end of the tank. It is the best lighted end of the aquarium—his lurking-places are at the darker end—and the only conclusion I can come to is, that his object is to sun himself. Why he is so ashamed of it as he appears to be, I cannot tell; but I believe, from the evidence of scientific research on the hostile influence of light upon the lower fungi, that sunning is essential to fish as a preventive of the parasitic fungus-disease which attacks them. I have observed

goldfish so affected rising to the surface of their pond and lying in the bright sunlight; but whether there is anything instinctive in this, or whether it is the result of weakness induced by the disease, I cannot pretend to say.

THE CHOICE.

A FAIRY there lived in the long, long ago,
Possessed, it is said, of all manner of skill;
And this Fairy proposed on a Youth to bestow
The gift he chose greatest for good or for ill.

'Wouldst thou be the gift the bold Warrior wields,
The Fairy commanded the stripling to say;
'As leader of legions, and victor of fields—
Unbounded thy glory, unquestioned thy sway?'

And straight the Youth answered: 'The Warrior hold
In his train bringeth Death, with its visitants grim,
And carnage, and ruin, and horrors untold,
To compass a bauble, or sanction a whim.'

'The Orator's gift then, say, shall it be thine,
Unrivalled in diction, unmatched in debate;
Far above all thy fellows still destined to shine;
The star of the senate, the hope of the state?'

Again spake the Youth: 'True, the Orator's tongue
May trumpet-like summon humanity's shoal:
But once Passion's gates on its hinges are swung,
Say, *then* can the Orator guide and control?'

'Well, be it thy choice, the Philosopher proud,
In wisdom and learning, of all, the elect;
The fearless uplifter of error's dark cloud,
The subtle diviner of cause and effect?'

'I care not to wield the Philosopher's staff,
Once again, half-regretful, the stripling spoke out;
'For his woes are but veiled by the cynical laugh,
And his vitals are gnawed by the demon of Doubt.'

'Ah, then,' cried the Fairy, 'the Painter's career
Is a glorious one truly to reckon upon;
His art brings the distant for evermore near,
And the shadow is sweet when the substance is gone.'

'Not for me be that art,' was the stripling's reply;
'Tis a mockery cruel as death, and a snare;
For the canvas is deaf to the passionate sigh,
And the rapt look of love is repaid by a stare.'

'Is the gift of the Poet thy bosom's desire,
To revel in fancy and sparkle in song,
And gladden men's hearts with thy rapturous lyre,
When wounded by sorrow or burdened with wrong?'

The stripling's eyes glistened with sudden delight,
And his heart thrilled with raptures he might not control;
For the Fairy had fathomed his secret aright,
And the gift of the Poet has entered his soul.

RICHARD ROBINSON.

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RECENT EGYPTIAN DISCOVERIES.

THE official Report of M. Maspero, the Director-in-chief of the Museums of Egypt, on the strange and startling discoveries made last year in Upper Egypt, is now published; and, as the Report has not yet been translated into English, it may interest some of our readers to have, from this and other sources, a brief account of what was found in the subterranean chamber at Deir-el-Bahari.

For some years, it had been evident to experienced eyes that the Arabs of Thebes had discovered some royal tombs whose locality was carefully kept secret. Papyri* and other objects of great value, bearing the royal cartouches of kings and princesses of the twenty-first dynasty, were finding their way to Europe. An extraordinary abundance of scarabs, bearing the cartouches of Thothmes III. and Rameses II., the two greatest conquering heroes of Egypt, flooded the market. Travellers visiting Luxor, if they were found to be rich and liberal, and not too particular in asking questions about their purchases, might even hear the enticing whisper that the mummy of the great Rameses II.

* It may be convenient to give here a brief explanation of some of the technicalities in use among Egyptologists. *Papyri* are the rolls made of an ancient writing material obtained from the stems of a plant called the papyrus. These papyri are generally covered with hieroglyphic writing, which is now quite decipherable by Egyptologists. A *cartouche* is an oval or oblong inclosure on Egyptian monuments and mummies, as also in papyri, containing the hieroglyphic characters which denote the names or titles of kings. The *scarab* is the sacred beetle of the ancient Egyptians, sculptured and otherwise illustrated on many of their works. Regarding the chronology of Egypt, it may be explained that the seventeenth dynasty of the Egyptian kings mentioned in the above article corresponds to from B.C. 1780 to B.C. 1703; the eighteenth dynasty, from B.C. 1703 (the Biblical period of Joseph in Egypt) to B.C. 1462; the nineteenth dynasty, from B.C. 1462 to B.C. 1288 (embracing the period of the Exodus); the twentieth dynasty, from B.C. 1288 to B.C. 1110; and the twenty-first dynasty, from B.C. 1110 to B.C. 980. Those dates, however, must be regarded only as approximations.

himself had been found, and might be had for a consideration! No sooner was M. Maspero appointed Director-in-chief of the Museums of Egypt, than he determined to sound this mystery to the bottom. The task was a difficult one. It meant nothing less than getting the truth out of the Arabs, a nation with whom lying is a natural gift, brought to its highest perfection by constant exercise. Moreover, the particular Arab, a certain Abd-er-Rasoul, to whom the sale of the antiquities in question could be clearly traced, and who possessed beyond a doubt the secret of the hiding-place, sheltered himself behind the ægis of the venerable Mustafa Aga, vice-consul of England and Belgium at Luxor. It was impossible for M. Maspero to arrest Mustafa Aga, shielded as he was by diplomatic immunity; and all that could be got out of Abd-er-Rasoul, after he had been arrested, imprisoned for two months, and frequently interrogated, was, that he was the servant of Mustafa Aga, and a member of his household.

After a time, Abd-er-Rasoul was set at liberty, provisionally; and the secret might still have been kept, had not discord arisen in his own family. He had four brothers who shared with him in this profitable mystery; and a bitter difference of opinion arising among them, the eldest went to the Mudir of Kenneh and told him that he knew of the hiding-place in question; that it contained about forty mummies, bearing emblems like those seen on the coffins of the Pharaohs. The news was at once carried to the Khedive. M. Maspero had just left Egypt for Europe; but M. Emile Brugsch, brother of the historian of Egypt, and subconservator of the Museum of Boolak, at Cairo, was, in July last year, despatched to Thebes, where he found the hiding-place in question at Deir-el-Bahari, in which were secreted some thirty-six mummies of kings, queens, princes, and high-priests.

But before we follow M. Emile Brugsch into the hiding-place of the Pharaohs, it may be as well to indicate briefly what manner of Pharaohs they were who were buried at Thebes. Egyptian

history divides itself broadly into three great periods—the Ancient Empire, the period of the Shepherd Kings, and the later Empire. The ordinary Briton has three fixed points whereby he strives to attach the mysterious and unfamiliar history of Egypt to history with which he is familiar—these points being the respective eras of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. Twelve dynasties, however, of the Ancient Empire had already sat on the throne of Memphis when Abraham visited Egypt. Memphis was the capital of this ancient empire, and the seat of the native monarchy until it was overthrown by the mysterious Shepherd Kings—a foreign race, who conquered and governed Egypt for an unknown period, and about whose origin and history very little is certainly known. But it is supposed to have been one of the Shepherd Kings who was Joseph's patron in Egypt; while, on the other hand, the Pharaohs who 'knew not Joseph,' the Pharaohs of the oppression and the deliverance, are identified with the kings of the Theban dynasties, under whom the Shepherd Kings were driven out of the land, and the Egyptian monarchy restored to more than its pristine glory. The two most illustrious of the Theban kings were Thothmes III. and Rameses II. The latter was he of whom the Greeks fabled under the name of Sesostria. Thothmes III. belongs to the eighteenth, Rameses II. to the nineteenth dynasty.

The great city of Thebes, where the splendid temples of Luxor and Karnak still bear witness to its ancient glory, lay on the eastern bank of the Nile. On the opposite side of the river was the city of the dead—among the limestone cliffs where the kings of the mightiest period of Egyptian history had carved their eternal homes. Between these cliffs and the shore, a series of magnificent temples, of which only the ruins now remain, served as chapels for the funeral rites and memorial services belonging to the worship of the deceased kings, who had ascended to the rank of gods. The tombs of the nineteenth dynasty are well known, and are, from their great extent, their elaborate decoration, the mysterious imagery with which their walls are covered, and the wonderful preservation of their colouring, among the most impressive of the wonders of Egypt. Of the eighteenth dynasty, only one of the original tombs has as yet been identified; though the splendid rock-temple now called Deir-el-Bahari, built by the great queen Hatshepsut—who has been called the Elizabeth of Egyptian history—appears to have been intended as a mausoleum for herself, her father Thothmes I., and her brother Thothmes II.; and to have been afterwards appropriated by her second brother, the great conqueror Thothmes III., when he succeeded in displacing her from the throne.

The temple of Deir-el-Bahari stands in the middle of a natural amphitheatre of cliffs, which is only one of a number of similar amphitheatres

into which the limestone mountains of the Tombs are broken up. In the wall of rock separating this basin of Deir-el-Bahari from the one next to it, some ancient Egyptian engineer had constructed the hiding-place whose secret had been kept for nearly three thousand years. A shaft six and a half feet square, and about thirty-seven feet deep, had been sunk in the solid rock; at the bottom of this shaft a long passage turned off towards the west, then abruptly towards the north, ending at last in a kind of oblong chamber, twenty-three feet long by thirteen feet in breadth. This was the mortuary chamber where the greater number of the mummies were last year found, and which are now deposited in the Boolak Museum.

As soon as M. Emilio Brugsch had arrived at the bottom of the shaft, and at the very entrance of the long passage, he came in sight of a yellow and white coffin; soon another, of the seventeenth dynasty; then more and more; while the ground was so littered with vases, funeral urns, statuettes, and other Egyptian funeral gear, that M. Brugsch, who had to advance in many places by crawling, scarcely knew where to place his hands and feet. What words can picture the feelings of the explorer, as glancing rapidly by the dim light of a candle from one coffin to another, he read on them the well-known cartouches of the greatest kings of Egyptian history! 'I ask myself now,' says M. Maspero, 'if I am not dreaming when I see and touch the bodies of so many great personages, of whom I never expected to know more than the names.'

Brugsch, however, did not waste much time in sentimental reflections. Two hours sufficed for the first inspection, and then the work of removal began. What that work was like under a July sun in Egypt, can be imagined by those who know what the Egyptian sun can do in March, when the thermometer often stands at ninety degrees in the shade. It took forty-eight hours to remove all the objects from the tomb; and many of the mummy-cases, which could with difficulty be lifted by twelve or sixteen men, took seven or eight hours to be carried from the cliff to the banks of the Nile, where they had to be ferried across to join the Museum steamer at Luxor. What a changed state of things for Rameses the Great! Who that saw him embarked in his stately funeral barge, and carried to his painted tomb in the rocks of Bab-el-Molook, followed by the great pageant of priests and singers and mourners, would ever have dreamed that he would be taken thence, and sent pell-mell with a shipload of other royal carcases, in a miserable Arab boat, to be finally laid out in the Boolak Museum for the gaze of the tourist! As the Museum steamer, with its freight of dead kings, steamed down the river towards Cairo, it was followed for some distance along the shore by a crowd of natives, the women with dishevelled hair shrieking and howling, and the men shooting off guns, as they do at funerals.

It may be noted here that the mummies found at Deir-el-Bahari were as a rule inclosed in a coffin or outer case made of wood, or of layers of linen glued and hardened together, and beautifully decorated with religious emblems and hieroglyphs. In some instances, one mummy was found to have two, in others three of those cases. The case is generally shaped like the mummy within it, the upper lid being so formed as to represent a kind of effigy of the deceased, painted in gold and colours. The dead body forming the mummy is occasionally wrapped in a shroud, held together by a series of bandages; but more generally the mummy is wrapped in bandages only. These bandages are frequently covered with written characters. So thoroughly was the process of embalming mastered by these ancient dwellers on the Nile, that some of the bodies show but few marks of decay. A remarkable instance is that of Pinotem II., whose head and face have been photographed, and whose features seem almost as recognisable now as when he was laid in his rocky tomb three thousand years ago.

M. Maspero classifies the treasures acquired by the Boolak Museum, as above described, in two groups: (1) Those belonging to the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth dynasties; and (2) those belonging to the twenty-first dynasty (the twentieth dynasty, curiously enough, not being represented in the find). The difference in workmanship between the two periods is so great, that an expert can tell at a glance to which period a mummy-case or an inscription belongs, without having to read the cartouches or royal names upon it. The first group belongs to the palmy days of the Egyptian monarchy; the latter, to its decadence.

The first group being the oldest, is naturally the worst as regards its state of preservation; and there are few of the coffins which do not show marks of having been restored, or even renewed in ancient times. Thus, the coffin of the great Rameses II. excited the suspicions of M. Maspero for some time, as it was evident by its style and the spelling of the inscriptions that it was the work of the twenty-first dynasty. But on removing some of the bandages of the mummy, the original inscription placed upon the corpse was discovered, which left no longer any doubt that this was indeed the body of the great Rameses. There are also two curious instances of false mummies, bundles of sticks or rags done up with such art, that if the Arabs had not torn open the bandages in search of jewellery or scarabs, the fraud would never have been detected. The coffin of Thothmes III. had been injured by the Arabs, and the mummy broken into three pieces. But the cloths in which he was originally wrapped still remain, covered with litanies of the dead for Thothmes III., the son of the queen Isi, whose name is therein given for the first time.

The oldest of the relics discovered in this hiding-place was the mummy and coffin of Raseskenen, an early Theban king of the seventeenth dynasty, which flourished about three thousand six hundred years ago. He was one of those who struggled to overthrow the dominion of the Shepherd Kings. The founder of the Theban monarchy, Ahmes I., the con-

queror of the Shepherd Kings, is also among the number. And second only in interest to the bodies of the great military heroes Thothmes III. and Rameses II., is that of Seti I., father of Rameses, the discovery of whose tomb forms such an exciting story in Belzoni's Travels, and whose splendid alabaster sarcophagus is now to be seen in the Soane Museum, London. Many of these mummies are still encircled with the garlands of flowers which were placed in their coffins just before they were closed, and which, after more than three thousand years, still retain their blue, red, and yellow colours! These have been ascertained to be larkspur, mimosa, and a red Abyssinian flower not now found in Egypt. In the coffin of Amenhotep I., son of Ahmes, a wasp had entered before it was closed, attracted no doubt by the flowers, and is still preserved, a solitary example of a mummied insect.

The second group consists of coffins and funereal objects belonging to the time of the twenty-first dynasty. We need not enumerate in full the mummies of kings, queens, and princesses of this dynasty which have been brought to light; but mention may be made of one that throws a touch of human pathos over the dry bones of three thousand years ago. In the coffin of the queen Makara, who had evidently died in childbirth, reposes the mummy of her new-born child. This infant, which perhaps only lived a few hours, bears all the titles proper to an Egyptian Princess, even that of 'Chief Royal Spouse!' Domestic affection was extremely strong among the ancient Egyptians; the family bond being a sacred and elevating thing, and women taking a position which is unknown in other oriental states. The presence of so many queens and princesses in this hiding-place shows that their corpses received as much reverence and care as those of their royal husbands and fathers. The mummy of the Princess Isi-em-Kheb, which is conjectured by M. Maspero to have been the last interred in this sepulchre, is surrounded by a rich collection of those objects which in ancient Egypt were always placed around a well-attended corpse: boxes of statuettes, vases for libations, goblets of blue or enamelled glass, baskets full of immense curled wigs, a hamper of provisions for her funeral repast, consisting of legs of gazelle, trussed geese, calves' head, raisins, dates, and fruit of the dôm-palm; and besides all these, a 'funeral tent' or canopy of some thousands of pieces of leather of various colours, wonderfully worked, under which her body had rested while in its funeral barge it crossed the Nile from Thebes.

An immense number of other objects of the same kind, among them four splendid papyri, have been found in this hoard. It is remarkable that almost all these objects belong to mummies of the twenty-first dynasty; the kings of the elder dynasties have brought little with them to this hiding-place but their coffins. This fact has led M. Maspero to conjecture that the cavern was used as a tomb for the Priest Kings, and that they were buried there in regular succession, while it was only used as a hiding-place for the bodies of those Pharaohs and their kin who had been previously buried in other tombs.

It is well known that the fall of the Ramesside Pharaohs, and the usurpation of the priests of

Ammon, brought about the dismemberment of Egypt. Another dynasty arose in Lower Egypt, and the Theban kings were reft of the richest part of their empire. Thebes, which lay out of the course of the great highways of Asiatic commerce, fell rapidly into poverty. The immense works carried on by the Ramessides had to be suspended, and the labouring population became impoverished in consequence, and broke out into disorders, which the central government was too weak to restrain. Bands of robbers were organised, which included in their ranks numbers of the ill-paid functionaries of the government, the chief object of whose depredations was the necropolis of Thebes, where so much wealth was known to be buried with the ancient kings. All this is matter of history. We have accounts of an inquiry instituted even before this into the state of the royal tombs, and we have the confessions of some of the robbers. They tell us how they picked the gold plates off the royal coffins, stole the jewellery and amulets from inside, and carried off the gold, silver, and bronze vases which had been placed in the tombs. In many cases, no doubt, where it was necessary to make shorter work, they carried off the royal mummy to pilage it at leisure, and then burnt or otherwise destroyed it. This may account for the absence of several bodies which we should expect to have been found in the hiding-place of Deir-el-Bahari along with the other kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties.

But the care of the government succeeded in preserving the most illustrious of the Pharaohs from the hands of the spoilers. The cercloths of Ramesses I., Seti I., and Ramesses II., bear several inscriptions, from which it appears that their mummies had been moved at several distinct times to different tombs, for the purpose of having the coffins or bandages renewed. This explains how it is that Ramesses II. is found in a coffin of the twenty-first dynasty, and that many of the other coffins have been wholly or in part restored. It is conjectured that it was to save these royal bodies from robbers that they were finally transferred to the hiding-place of Deir-el-Bahari, which hiding-place is believed to have been the family tomb of the twenty-first dynasty. The poverty of the kings of that dynasty prevented their building for themselves splendid painted and sculptured tombs, like those of their predecessors. They had to be content with one common vault, and with varnished wooden coffins instead of alabaster sarcophagi; sometimes, indeed, they were glad even to steal a coffin that had belonged to a former king. Thus the priest-king Pinotem reposes in the coffin of Thothmes I. It is easy to conjecture, from what has been said already, that the weak government of the Priest Kings, and the increase of disorder, led them to seek safety for their relics in concealment; and that being themselves at the head of the priestly order, they had the funeral rites in their own hands, and were thus able to keep the secret of their burial-place till it perished with them.

M. Maspero hints that he has more surprises in store for us yet. He suspects the existence of another hiding-place known to the Arabs. The energy and shrewdness of his colleagues and himself are not likely to fail in unearthing this

new mystery; but even were they to discover the mummy of Menes himself, or of the Pharaohs who built the great Pyramids, they can do nothing to eclipse the glory with which the discoveries of 1881 have marked the Directorship of M. Maspero.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXII.—A BLUE FOOLSCAP DOCUMENT, WRITTEN IN A STIFF AND LEGIBLE HAND, LAY ON THE PAGE BEFORE HIM.

ON a bright spring evening, Val Strange's yacht dropped anchor in sight of Welbeck Head and Brierham spire; and four stout fellows pulled him ashore, and landed him in a little bay four miles from home. He knew the country; and leaving the waste sea-beach behind him, struck into the fields, and strolled through green meadows and by fast-greening boughs towards Brierham. The very earth was odorous, and the air like balm. Welbeck Head, half-a-dozen miles to the left, looked in the light of the setting sun as if it were built of burnished bronze; and in its hollows lay shadows so purple and so liquid, that one might well have fancied every cranny of the vast headland filled with wine. The western air was refulgent gold; the eastern air, a pearly rose; and the zenith, a blue so soft and dreamy, it drew the soul as well as the eye towards it, and led out all the observer's nature in vague sweet hopes and fancies. Val had surrendered himself to Fate, or in surrendering, had created Fate. Who cared? But he was not at ease. Regret and dissatisfaction lurked at the bottom of all his thoughts. There are times when all things resemble the little book which the angel gave to John in Patmos, and the utmost sweetness has its bitter undertaste and aftertaste. Eye and ear and nostril drank delight as he walked; but the soul sat tremulous in the midst of joy, and read half-veiled prophecies of sorrow and disaster. The heart of man is deceitful above all things. Val had contrived to turn himself from false friend and dishonest lover into knight-deliverer. It would be virtue in Constance to break her engagement with Gerard—

Since therein she would evitate and shun
A thousand irreligious cursed hours
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Val's acquaintance with Shakspeare could not let him miss an excuse so forcibly put, and so pat to his own desires. And it was virtue in him also to persuade her to break that bond. He persuaded himself that he had been a coward in running away, and that it was a duty towards all three concerned—towards Constance and Gerard and himself to hinder a union in which on one side there was no love and no possibility of love. Let a man set himself to the task of self-persuasion—let him gag Conscience, and lend his ear to his own soul's sophistry, and he can credit anything. Val is not the only man who has transmuted scoundrelism into heroism, or deified his own desire and set it up as duty.

He was not by any means sure of his plans; but he was resolved on enduring no delay. He would find a means of communicating with

Constance, and he would leave no effort unmade to deliver her from the possibility of a loveless marriage. He was willing to face contumely, to endure his friend's hatred and scorn, to know that hard things would be said of him by men whose judgment he valued. And since he quailed from these things in his inmost heart, he found it heroic to face them, and was no more a fool or a villain in that self-deceit than ninety-nine out of a hundred might be if they set their minds that way. 'So *carpe diem*, Juan, *carpe, carpe*.' Ah, the note of joy rings false in the voice of the most mournful of all British singers, and in the silence that follows may steal the tones of an older and a wiser poet: 'Rejoice, O young man . . . but remember!'

Walking in such mood as I have striven to indicate, Val came in the course of half an hour or thereabouts upon that ugly landscape-spoiling property of his, the paper-mill; and there, in the act of mounting his dogcart, was Henderson the manager. Henderson, catching sight of Val, descended and awaited his coming.

'The sight of you is good for sore eyes, Mr Strange,' said he. 'You are looking wonderfully well, sir.' And indeed Val was mahogany coloured with his six weeks of sea-breezes.

'Any news in this dull quarter of the world?' he asked.

The manager quite stared at him. 'News, sir? Haven't you heard?'

'Heard what?'

'You don't mean to say,' said Henderson, 'that you know nothing of what has happened to anybody down here?'

'But I do mean to say it,' Val returned. 'What has happened? Whose cat is dead?' For Mr Henderson was a marvellous retailer of marvels which had in them very little of the wonderful for other people.

'Lumby Hall and the Park are in the market, to begin with,' responded the manager with something of the air of one who justifies himself.

Val turned pale under his bronze, and repeated the words questioningly: 'Lumby Hall and Park are in the market?'

'The House has gone to pieces. The cashier, Snarling—no, Garling—that was his name—bolted with half a million, so it's said, and everything has gone under the hammer.'

This news shook the hearer from head to foot, and he held on by the rail of the dogcart, and cast so stricken a look on Henderson, that the worthy man was alarmed, and insisted on Val entering the office and sitting down.

'I'd no idea, sir,' he said, 'that the news would affect you so.—Let me offer you a little whisky. It's just a sample that I had sent in yesterday.' He opened a cupboard, and produced a black bottle and a wine-glass.

'No!' said Val, waving his hand against it. 'It was so horribly sudden, I was shocked. What has become of—of Gerard Lumby? He was going to be married, poor fellow.'

'Yes,' said Henderson, almost with a relish. 'He was going to wed that handsome lass at the Grange, Mr Jolly's daughter. That's all broken off now, of course. The losses have driven poor old Mr Lumby out of his senses; and they tell me he just sits like a baby and counts his fingers, and they feed him like a child.'

'Horrible!' said Val with a shudder. He felt as if he had planned to break into a house, and heaven's lightning had scattered it to ruin and ashes at his feet. All this news had become quite an old story to Henderson and his compeers. The interest had faded out, and it was a pleasure now to renew it by telling the tale to one who was so deeply moved by it. He flowed on, therefore, and told all he knew, and perhaps a trifle more.

'And curiously enough,' he added, when his tale was done, 'we've got a memento of the great commercial disaster here. It came this very afternoon; and if you'll come this way, I'll show it to you.'

Val followed him, incurious. His mind was still deadened by the shock of thoughts which had assailed him at the first. Constance was free, and his guilty plan—for he knew its guilt in the searching light of that moment—was no longer needed. And Gerard, his friend, had not only lost the love Val had meant to steal from him, but had lost all with her—father, fortune, home. Val Strange trembled at that swift and awful blow, and loathed the thought of his own falsity to honour.

The manager led the way from the office to the working chambers of the mill, and halted in a great storhouse with rough-cast walls, where tons of waste-paper lay heaped to the ceiling—vast piles of newspaper returns; whole libraries of worthless books torn from their bindings, and ranged in level rows or thrown in heaps; pyramids of coarse packing-papers, pyramids of lawyers' briefs, parliamentary returns, blue-books, contractors' specifications—a thousand things that had served their turn, or swerved aside from it and fallen useless; and at the edge of the waste, a column of books of unusual size. The binding had been torn from these, and the backs were a tangle of broken string and cracked strips of glue.

'These,' said the manager, 'are Lumby and Lumby's ledgers. I got them for the mill for a mere trifle.' There was a rough table on strong trestles in the room; and Henderson, lifting one of the great volumes, laid it down and turned over the leaves. 'Splendid stuff,' he said, with the paper between his finger and thumb. 'They had everything made to last; and you'd have thought the concern as solid as the hills.'

Val absently took a leaf of the great ledger and turned it over, and looked at the methodical neat entries, column after column. The action and the glance were alike automatic. He had no thought of what he saw. Mr Henderson swelled himself a little with the natural dignity of the showman, and looked on, pleased with his discovery and with its effect upon his employer. A workman in search of somebody in authority, looked into the building, and seeing the manager there, told him of some slight matter which had gone wrong. Henderson, with more alacrity than common, departed to set the something right, and Val was left alone. Turning over the great stiff pages absently, he came upon some papers crushed between the leaves, and mechanically smoothing them, uttered a sudden exclamation. Next he snatched up these papers, and read them at a glance, and laid them down again with his head whirling. A wild surprise and

a terrible temptation reached his mind together, for the papers he had discovered were no other than the drafts made out by Garling in surrender of his booty. A blue foolscap document, written in a stiff and legible hand, lay on the page before him, and Val's eyes swept over these words, clear as print:

'In consideration of the receipt of a written promise to refrain from criminal proceedings, this day handed to me by Gerard Horatio Lumby, I, the undersigned, make confession that I have robbed the firm of Lumby and Lumby, of 107 Gresham Street, of the sum of two hundred and fifty-three thousand two hundred pounds, and do now make full and complete restitution of the same.—EDWARD GARLING.'

Henderson's voice sounded outside, giving final instructions about that trifling something wrong which had called him away; and Val, with an impulse for which he did not care to account, swiftly folded the papers and transferred them to his breast-pocket. His ready instinct told him that while ignorant as to how the 'full and complete restitution' was to be made, he nevertheless perhaps held in his possession the key to recovered fortune for his rival and his friend. Constance was free; but how long might she remain free if he handed these all-important papers at once to their rightful owners? The temptation which assailed him in the instant of discovery was not to destroy the papers—for that would have been too gross a crime for him to contemplate—but to reserve them until he had made good his own ground with Constance. In the mere fraction of a second, his mind seemed to take in every side of the case. Gerard had already lost Constance, and by this time had at least recognised the fact, if he had not yet begun to grow reconciled to it. If he, Valentine Strange, succeeded Gerard Lumby as her affianced husband, Gerard Lumby would be no worse off than now; and if, thereafter, he handed over the discovered papers, Gerard would have every reason, comparatively, to be happy. If, on the other hand, he did what his honourable and native instinct prompted him to do, and gave up the papers at once, was there not a chance that Gerard would re-assert his claim, and a chance that the claim would be allowed? Whilst all this and more raged through his mind, Henderson returned.

'You're really looking ill, Mr. Strange,' he said, surprised at Val's aspect. 'You'd better let me drive you home.'

No, Val protested; he was well enough—a little startled, that was all. He would walk across the fields. And so, with a brief leave-taking, he was going, when he bethought him of a precautionary measure. 'Don't have those ledgers meddled with, Henderson,' he said. 'I should like to look at them. Leave them as they are.' Henderson promised.—Mr. Strange's desire was an understandable whim enough. Val was keen and quick, and had something of that faculty which makes successful scoundrels and great generals: in things that really interested him, he left nothing essential undone. He had not yet decided whether or not to be an utter knave; and if the papers had afterwards to be re-discovered, it would be well to have a reasonable place in which to re-discover

them. What better place could there be than that in which they had been originally discovered? But he had not gone a hundred yards away from the mill, when he returned. Henderson was again mounting his dog-cart, when Val came running back to him.

'On second thoughts, Henderson, don't keep those ledgers. Use them up at once. I can't bear to see them again. Use them up first thing to-morrow.'

Again Henderson promised, and again Mr. Strange's desire was an understandable whim enough. How should the manager guess the fight in his employer's soul which resulted in those contradictory orders? Val strode away across the fields rapidly, half-fearing lest he should rescind the order. So weak was he to resist the tempest which tossed him, that before he had again reached the place at which he had turned back, he threw himself on chance to know whether he should finally keep or destroy the ledgers. On that point for the moment he contrived to pivot the greater question—whether he should here and now play the man, or play the knave. 'Heads, I keep them—Tails, they go.' He drew a few loose coins from his pocket. Heads predominated! Fate seemed to tempt him; but a sudden revulsion at the thought that honour should be at the mercy of so poor a chance, sent him along the road again, and he left the great ledgers doomed behind him.

The domestics of his house were used to his comings and goings, and he found all things in tolerable readiness. An hour or two after his arrival, dinner was served up, and he sat down to it with little appetite, and toyed with the dishes one after another, and sent them away scarcely tasted. He had not yet made up his mind, and could not; but over a bottle of Clos de Vougeot and a cigar in his own especial den, he completed the perusal of Garling's entire narrative, and so made himself familiar with the whole circumstances of the case. In that narrative he scarcely knew whether to wonder most at the insolent completeness of the disclosure, or the amazing patience and cunning of the fraud. 'My crime,' 'my fraud,' 'my system of embezzlement,' and kindred phrases, were used with a scorn for periphrasis, and an absence of any affectation of repentance so complete, that the reader's admiration and detestation of the writer seemed to grow side by side. 'I was first led,' wrote Garling, 'to the contemplation of my crime by the ridiculous laxity which left all things in my power.'

'Ah!' sighed Val, laying down the manuscript after re-reading the opening passages, and that amongst them. 'How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds, makes ill deeds done!' He filled his glass again, and sat staring at the fire. There was a vinous glow at his heart, a vinous brightness in his brain. 'I can't associate myself,' said he proudly, 'with a villain of that type. If I hold these papers an hour longer than I can help, I shall identify myself with Mr. Garling; an association I have no mind for.' His decision was made at last. Gerard should have his own again, and Val would rely on the justice of Fortune to repay him for this sacrifice to honour. In the glowing warmth with which the generous vintage filled him, he had an easy

presage of victory. Why should he be afraid of Lumby? he asked himself. Constance had never cared for the fellow, but had been persuaded into the match because it was socially a good one. She had cared for *him*—he knew it, though she had not confessed it, and had indeed in self-defence denied it. Taking it altogether, he, Val Strange, had acted very well, and was still acting very well. Lumby could find no reasonable fault with him now. He was genuinely sorry for Gerard's misfortunes, and in his own sense of security, he began to be genuinely glad that he could put a partial end to them. And indeed a quarter of a million sterling might well console a man for the loss of a prospective wife. Not in his own case, of course. That would have been an absurd suggestion. Val, never having felt the want of money, had a noble scorn for it. He threw it about with a splendid recklessness and royal prodigality, though he never spent a quarter of his income, being innocent of expensive vices, and despising the card-table and the turf. But Gerard was poor, and the return of the money would compensate for much to him. And be that as it might, by all rules of love Val had a perfect right to try his fortune now.

He rang the bell, and the old butler answered the summons. 'My yacht,' said Val, 'is lying about three miles this side of Daffin Head. Supposing this'—indicating the bottle—'to be the paper-mill, and this'—indicating a cigar-box—'to be our present position, the yacht is here;' and he set down his wine-glass in a straight line beyond the bottle. 'As straight beyond the mill as you can go. You understand?'

'Yes, sir,' said the butler. 'It'll be in Quadross Bay.'

'That's it,' said Val. 'I had forgotten the name of the place. Send one of the fellows to the yacht in the morning to tell Richards to pack my things and come up at once. Have him here by half-past nine at latest. I am going up to town in the morning.'

'Very good, sir,' returned the butler, and retired.

Jim the groom being charged with the commission, saw his way to an unauthorised enjoyment; and putting dogcart and horse together at once, drove to a certain hostel within half a mile of the little bay, and there meeting some of the yacht's crew, went aboard with them, and held high revel until one in the morning, by which time his master, with a comfortable sense of virtue on him, had just turned into bed. Jim the groom reappeared in due time with Val's body-servant and divers portmanteaus; and away went Val, body-servant, portmanteaus, and all, up to London, by earliest train from Brierham Station. He had learned from the butler that the Grange, like the Hall, was empty. He had no immediate means of learning Constance's whereabouts, but that could not be a difficult matter in London. Her father and her brother were probably at the Albany as usual, and there was Miss Lucretia to apply to. But first, with a feeling of magnanimity and honesty in his bosom which was refreshing after his late self-accusings, he sought his lawyer, and from him obtained the name and address of the legal adviser of the late firm of Lumby and Lumby. The legal adviser, who was a high-dried little man, extremely old, and dry

and wrinkled, was by no means so sanguine of the restoration of the property as Val had been.

'Mr Garling,' he said, in explanation of his doubts, 'has gone to Spain. The police can tell you so much about him. It is very probable that this is so much waste-paper after all, giving us merely the melancholy satisfaction of knowing the truth. The English and continental journals gave news of the failure of the firm and of Garling's flight, with some supposed enormous gains; and it is quite on the cards that he may have renewed his hold upon the money—quite on the cards.'

At this view, Val became so evidently depressed, that the lawyer proposed to set an end to doubt at once by a visit to the Bank and a telegraphed inquiry to the bankers at Madrid. Val assenting eagerly, the high-dried little man got into a cab with him and drove away without loss of time. Then again Val produced the wonderful papers and told his tale. The manager having heard it through with great astonishment, wired at once, and promised to despatch a messenger with tidings of the answer. Val arranged to call upon the lawyer at the hour of six, and went upon his own inquiries. First to the Albany, where he learned nothing. Mr Jolly and his son were out of town, and since they had left no instructions for the forwarding of letters, were not expected to be long away. Next he repaired to Chesterfield Street, Mayfair, where Miss Lucretia's house was found deserted. Val knocked and rang, refusing to believe that his quest had ended in a no-thoroughfare; and at last, disheartened, got into his cab again, and was driven to his own chambers. Emerging thence, he took another hansom, and drove wildly about town, calling on everybody he knew to whom Reginald was known. He gained no more by this move than by the others. Streets were 'up' on all hands; the faces of the houses were given up to the painters, and the pavements were planted thickly with scaffoldings and ladders. Nearly everybody was out of town, and Val met nobody who could give him the information he wished for. By the time at which his unavailing search was ended, he was due at the lawyer's, and hastened thither.

'No answer from Spain, yet,' said the lawyer in response to his inquiries. 'I have received a message from the manager, who promises to send me the news when it comes. It will be forwarded to him at his private residence, and he will wire to me. Will you wait?'

Val answered in the affirmative, and sat down. The minutes glided slowly by, more slowly than he had ever known them glide. Twilight began to fall; and the lamplighter, visible from the window, travelled round the square, leaving the lamps agleam behind him. The clerks had gone already; and the lawyer, having lit the gas and drawn down the blinds, sat with his parchment face bent over a parchment deed, and read and read and read, making pencil-notes in a book at his side, but never looking at the hand which wrote them. This proceeding getting to have something of an eerie look at last to Val's eyes, and an eerie effect upon his nerves, he begged leave of absence for a quarter of an hour.

'I shall be here for another hour at least, now that I have begun this,' said the lawyer. 'Go and dine by all means. Take your time.'

Val let himself out, and stumbled down the dusky staircase. He did not care about dining; but, cigar in mouth, paced up and down the flagged border of the square, keeping watch upon the lawyer's door. After half an hour or so, he grew tired of this, and returned. The man of law admitted him, and set his parchment face above the parchment deed again. The place became so silent, that Val could hear his own watch ticking. An hour went by drearily, and the parchment being done with, was folded, put into a tin case and locked up in a tin box, and the lawyer lowered his lamp. 'Something the matter with the wires,' he said composedly. 'Suppose we give them to half-past nine. What do you say?'

Val said 'Yes' to that; and they sat on in silence.

'Do you mind this twilight?' asked the old man, after a great gap of time had been crossed. 'It rests my eyes.'

'Not at all,' Val answered; and again they sat in silence. Rumours of the life of the streets reached them now and then; at times a footstep coming nearer made the watchers prick their ears and listen; twice a footstep paused outside and went on again. At last, upon the very limit of the time, and when the lawyer had already reached out his hand for his overcoat, the sound of a hurried footstep and a cheerful whistle coming near arrested it. The outstretched hand changed suddenly from its first intent, and without moving a muscle, enjoined silence. The step paused before the outer door, and the whistle ceased; and then, as though paid in proportion to the noise he made, and wildly anxious to increase his salary, the owner of the step plunged up-stairs and battered at the door. The old man responded, received a telegram, turned up the lamp, put on his spectacles, opened the envelope, all with aggravating slowness, drew forth the inclosure, and read it. Then suddenly flashing from an old man to a young one, he strode across with outstretched hand and slapped Val on the shoulder.

'You have done it, sir! The money is safe. That scoundrel hasn't got it, after all.' The parchment face was flushed, and the old eyes were moistened. 'I didn't dare to hope it,' said the old fellow. 'I declare, sir, I am as much rejoiced as if the money were my own!'

LITERARY COINCIDENCES.

WHAT is plagiarism? Among all the questions connected with literary criticism there is perhaps none to which it is more difficult to give a satisfactory answer. Of course it is easy enough to define plagiarism in the abstract as a form of theft, the things stolen being thoughts, phrases, images, and the like; the difficulty is to decide whether in this or in that case the offence has really been committed. Sometimes the evidence for the accuser may be obviously too crushing to be set aside; such as when a sermon or an essay or a poem which professes to be the work of one man is discovered to be identical, sentence for sentence and word for word, with the pre-

vious work of somebody else. In such a case, it is tolerably clear that deliberate 'conveyance,' as Pistol loved to describe it, must have been practised by preacher, or essayist, or poet number two. Literature is, however, full of duplicates the existence of which cannot by any means be so readily explained. Some thoughts have a trick of turning up again and again in the same kind of dress, and though sometimes the similarity of costume is so marked as strongly to suggest a suspicion of literary larceny, the kindly critic is generally free to believe either that the reproduction has been unconscious—a vague reminiscence having been mistaken for an original idea—or that the correspondence is altogether fortuitous, and that two minds have hit not only upon the same thought, but the same form of expression, while working in entire independence of each other.

There are ideas so obvious, that no one can be surprised to meet them again; and again; and certain methods of putting them are so natural, that it is clearly unfair to affirm that the last sayer is necessarily a plagiarist. For example, the thought that well-doing is in itself a happiness and a satisfaction to the well-doer, without any regard to accompanying pleasure or profit, is a truth likely to be expressed at some time or other by any man who has a real sympathy with goodness; and there is nothing to wonder or to cavil at when we find it enunciated by different writers in very much the same language. Henry More, in 'Cupid's Conflict,' says that 'Virtue is to herself the best reward.' Dryden, more tersely, in his 'Tyrannie Love,' tells us that 'Virtue is her own reward;' and, with the simple change of the pronoun from 'her' to 'its'—the form in which the thought has attained general currency—he has been followed by Prior in his 'Imitation of Horace,' by Gray in his 'Epistle to Methuen,' and by Home, in whose drama of 'Douglas' the familiar phrase again makes its appearance. We say the 'phrase' advisedly, for the idea itself is constantly appearing, and is expressed nowhere with greater felicity than in the little poem by Mr Tennyson entitled 'Wages,' which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* about twenty years ago, and has been republished in the later editions of his works.

There has always been a controversy between the pure theologians and the pure moralists; hence, when Pope wrote—

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:

he doubtless expressed, in his usual terse epigrammatic way, what had often been thought by previous speculators; but every one does not know how nearly even his mere phrasing had been anticipated by Cowley, who, in his lines on the death of Crashaw, a contemporary poet, apologetically remarks:

His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets, might
Be wrong; his life I'm sure was in the right.

In one of his 'Epigrams,' Pope was himself the originator of a thought which was afterwards appropriated by Cowper. The former wrote:

You beat your pate, and fancy wit will come;
Knock as you please, there's nobody at home;

while the latter, in his poem 'Conversation,' has the suspiciously similar couplet :

His wit invites you by his looks to come ;
But when you knock, it never is at home.

It is not often, however, that we encounter so awkward-looking a parallelism as this ; and critics in the detective line of business, who are never so happy as when they think they have caught a writer in the act of decking himself with borrowed plumes, are generally content with evidence of a much weaker order. No literary man of our own day suffered more than Alexander Smith from these policemen of the press, who, like their prototypes in blue, seemed to think that their promotion depended upon the number of convictions they could secure. Some of the instances they collected had of course a more impressive look than others, and gave an air of respectability to the prosecution ; but the attempt to prove Smith a mere literary shop-lifter was a miserable failure. Perhaps one of the most striking hits was the discovery that while the Scottish poet had written of

The torrent raging down the long ravine,

Mr Tennyson had some years previously published the very similar line :

The long brook falling down the cloven ravine.

It is very probable that this was really an instance of unconscious reproduction ; but even supposing that Tennyson's line were consciously present to Smith's mind at the moment when he wrote his own, his offence was not one which called for any great display of critical severity. Sir Arthur Helps, in a cordial consolatory letter which he addressed to Smith, said very happily, that 'really, if people were at all critics, they should be able to distinguish between the man who *conquers* and the man who *steals*.' The so-called plagiarism just quoted is surely an example of conquest rather than of theft. With all respect to Mr Tennyson, whose poetical position has long been assured, one may express an opinion that the later line is stronger and more picturesque than the earlier one. The words 'torrent' and 'raging' harmonise better with the idea of a ravine, which we naturally think of as rugged and precipitous, than the tamer 'brook' and 'falling.'

Mr P. P. Alexander, in the appendix to his interesting biographical sketch of Smith, points out another instance of this kind of conquest ; and very truthfully remarks, that 'in adopting an image from a previous poet, and in so doing ennobling it, as much genius may be shown as in the invention of an original image.' Keats in one of his poems speaks of a

Gold vase embossed
With long-forgotten story ;

and one of the characters in Alexander Smith's 'Life Drama' tells how

An opulent soul
Dropt in my path like a great cup of gold
All rich and rough with stories of the gods.

Who does not see how much more of fullness and distinction there is in the image of Smith than in that of Keats ?

Enough has been said of this one victim of

unfair criticism. No one whose opinion is worth anything believes in the validity of the charges made by the irresponsible, if not exactly indolent, reviewers ; indeed, Mr Alexander in his elaborate defence of his friend, proves that by the use of their method almost every writer of eminence might be shown to be a systematic thief. He points out that Burns's lines—

An' my fause lover stole the rose,
But ah ! he left the thorn wi' me,

find their original in Shakspeare's 'All's Well that Ends Well,' where Diana exclaims :

Ay ! so you serve us.
Till we serve you ; but when you have our roses,
You basely leave our thorns to prick ourselves,
And mock us with our bareness.

He shows that just in the same way as Smith was supposed to be indebted to Keats and others, so Burns might be supposed to be indebted to Shakspeare. In the same sense, Tennyson has been indebted to Burns and to Hogg, Wordsworth to Milton and even to Byron, Browning to Shelley, and almost every great poet to some predecessor. The whole controversy is a childish one. If a new writer has anything to say worth hearing, there is no reason for our feeling injured should he happen to clothe his thought in phrases that remind us of some mighty master. Absolute originality of the kind demanded by superficial critics would not please us even if we could get it ; it would fail to move us, because it would never touch the electric chain of familiar association ; and would prove not the greatness of the mental power of its producer, but rather his vanity, conceit, and utter want of reverence for the past. This is particularly true in the realm of poetry, from which almost all our illustrations have so far been drawn ; the fact being, as Arthur Hugh Clough puts it, that 'poetry, like science, has its final precision ; and there are expressions of poetic knowledge which can no more be re-written than could the elements of geometry. There are pieces of poetic language which, try as men will, they will simply have to recur to, and confess that it has been done before them.'

A later writer remarks, with special reference to a charge of plagiarism from Shakspeare, that the great dramatist 'belongs to us all. Whenever he expresses a thought, his expression becomes a part of the thought ; and if we take the thought, we must needs take it in Shakspeare's clothing, for no other will fit.' These passages without doubt tell the truth concerning a matter about which there is a great deal of careless thought and writing. We are all of us indebted to our predecessors, and the men who contribute the greatest amount of new material to the common stock are always the first to be accused of plagiarism, because they boldly and honestly confess their indebtedness. They do not, to use Sheridan's words, 'serve your thoughts as gipsies do stolen children—disfigure them to make them pass for their own ;' they let them stand as they find them, and the small critic has no difficulty in swearing to the identity of the conveyed property.

The deliberate thief is too clever a person to be caught so easily as this. The literary watch-cases and silver-spoons which he purloins are

always sent to the melting-pot and made unrecognisable before they are permitted to be seen in his possession; but they have generally lost so much in the process, that the recovery of them is a game which is hardly worth the candle. The theft which is a theft indeed is probably to be discovered in the chapter or sentence which is generally supposed to be the most original in the book where it happens to be found.

Though a hunt after plagiarisms is a fruitless sort of business, it is very interesting, and not altogether unproductive, to gather together the parallelisms and coincidences of which literature is full, and which seem to hint at some law of mind in virtue of which a given thought naturally clothes itself in one particular dress, and a given relation between two things tends to suggest some one image. We take two of the passages just quoted, and we easily find their duplicates within the range of our own reading. Clough, as reported above, says that 'there are expressions of poetic knowledge which can no more be re-written than the elements of geometry;' and the other day, when re-reading Emerson's essay on Art in the volume entitled 'Society and Solitude,' we came across a sentence in which he affirms that 'good poetry could not have been otherwise written than it is.' No one would accuse Emerson of plagiarism; but here Clough certainly anticipated him; and Sheridan's figure was in like manner anticipated by Churchill, in whose works we find the couplet:

Like gipsies, lest the stolen brat be known,
Defacing first, then claiming for their own.

In Emerson's poems is to be found a parallelism more generally recognisable than the one given from his prose. We are all familiar with the line in which Wordsworth declared that

Nature
Never did betray the heart that loved her;

and in the 'wood-notes' of the American poet-philosopher we read:

For Nature ever faithful is
To such as trust her faithfulness.

Wordsworth himself, indeed, poetical innovator as he is, now and then becomes a reproducer; and one instance of his reproduction is so striking, that one wonders it was not pounced upon by some of his fervent contemporary critics. Both Milton and Wordsworth use the phrase 'married to immortal verse,' the one in 'L'Allegro,' the other in 'The Excursion.'

Just one more instance we shall give. In Herbert's collection of maxims, published under the title of 'Jacula Prudentum,' there is included the beautiful proverb which tells us that 'To a close-shorn sheep, God gives wind by measure.' This proverb was adopted and improved by Sterne, from whose 'Sentimental Journey' we learn that 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb'—a form in which the proverb has passed into the inner sanctuary of our religious thought.

A collection of parallelisms such as the above might easily be extended to the dimensions of a volume; but it would be curious rather than valuable, for the psychological law which these things illustrate betrays itself as clearly in a

score of instances as in a thousand. That the likeness between men's minds is more striking than the difference, seems to be the fact which is hinted at by the greater number of these literary coincidences; and if we are right when we say 'Many men, many minds,' we are equally right when we say 'Many men, one mind;' for it can hardly be doubted that the great American thinker from whom we have already quoted announced a great truth when he spoke of a supreme reason which we do not possess, but by which we are possessed—an 'over-soul' which is the common intelligence of mankind, and which at times, through various mediums, utters duplicate messages, not merely identical in substance, but nearly so in form and expression.

PLAYING THE WRONG CARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

THE good people of Fieldenham were advised by printed bills, that owing to circumstances over which the manager had no control, the entertainment announced for the second night would not be given. The townsfolk bore this disappointment with great equanimity. The day was marked with a white stone in the memories of Professor Regalini and Mademoiselle Lucile—to recur once more to the dignity of professional names—for, on the strength of the windfall which had dropped so unexpectedly in his path, the former treated his little friend with an excursion to a very famous spot some few miles from the town. If the scenery from this point was scarcely appreciated at its real worth by the pair, so much could not be said of the cakes and syllabubs for which the resort was so noted.

On their return, which was in time for early tea, the Professor was in time to see his coadjutor set forth on his errand, duly prepared for the impersonation of this unknown foreigner. It had indeed been arranged that Styles should return in time to see Charley and give his opinion. The latter was first to call at Myrtle Villa; and then, if his assumption were pronounced satisfactory, he would proceed at once to Elms Knoll. Styles—we find we have descended again to the prose of real life—was anxious to see his friend in character, not only to give his opinion as to its success, but to aid him by suggesting some improvements—suggestions which his own experience would render valuable.

Mr Charles was sitting in the little parlour at their lodgings, his back to the light, and leaning his head upon his hand in a thoughtful attitude. Mr Styles stepped briskly into the room, hesitated, faltered out two or three doubtful words; then Charles looked up and smiled.

'My eye!' exclaimed Styles. He was almost speechless from astonishment, envy, and admiration. He drew a long breath, and repeated his ejaculation: 'My eye! How you do mug up, Charley! You might go through this town, ah! if you owed money in every shop, and I don't believe a soul would know you.'

'It is good, then?' said the musician.

'Good!' repeated the other. 'It would puzzle your mother and father to swear to you. And what's more extraordinary than all, Charley, is

that you have hit on just the expression of that photo.'

'You think so?' asked the musician again.

'Think! my boy! It's a certainty!' almost rapturously exclaimed Styles. 'Of course it's an accident, a lucky accident; but I don't believe—I really don't, Charley—that I could have made you up better myself, if I had been here.'

Charles smiled his quiet meaning smile again, and after receiving some further congratulations, started on his errand. Mr Styles, in the fullness of his admiration, was anxious to show Lucile so splendid a 'make-up,' that young lady being quite as good a judge of such matters as her elders; but it appeared she had gone out with the landlady. Mr Styles was vexed at this; for, as he said, the girl might never have such another chance.

A very few minutes sufficed to take the musician to Myrtle Villa, where, on inquiring for Mr Hythe, and giving his name as Mr Carlos Villada, he was shown into the presence of that gentleman, who was of course expecting him to call.

'Pray, be seated, sir,' said Mr Hythe, as his visitor bowed. 'I have not the pleasure—I think—of knowing you. May I ask what you wish to see me for?'

The face into which he was looking as he spoke, gradually changed in expression; a familiar light played in the eyes, and the lips curved into a smile.

'Is it possible?' exclaimed Hythe. 'Well did your friend say that I might safely intrust the business to your hands, for the transformation is wonderful. Let me hear if you quite understand the history; if you do, all the rest is safe.'

'I am fully certain of the business,' returned Charles. 'There is no merit in that, for all is so simple. Your brother having been foolish enough to throw himself away on a foreigner—contemptible and worthless of course—justly punished her presumption in allying herself with the respectable English, by deserting her. That she was left in a strange country with an infant helpless, only made the position more disagreeable for your worthy brother; yet now he weakly repents of his conduct; and if not judiciously taken care of, he will squander much money on this foreign person's memory, to the detriment of his family. That is not respectable—not English! If the foreign person did not die, she ought to have died.—Am I right so far, sir?'

'You are right so far,' returned Hythe with a good deal of emphasis; 'you are perfectly right, sir. But, whether it is from your not being thoroughly acquainted with our language, or not, I can't say, you put the matter in as disagreeable a light as possible.'

'Pardon. I am very wrong, no doubt,' said Charles with a bow. 'It must be as you say, because I have had acquaintance with the English language. Well, sir, then I have to see Mr Maurice Hythe, tell him I am the relative of this foreign person, whom he married under the name of Wilstons.'

'Why, confound it! I did not tell you that last night!' interrupted Hythe.

'Tell me what, sir?' asked the other, with another smile; he smiled each time he spoke.

'Why, I did not tell you the name under which he married,' continued Hythe. 'I know we talked about it; but I have been trying to manage without explaining that point.'

'Well, sir,' replied Charles, with another smile and a shrug of his shoulders, 'if you did not tell me, how shall I know? Consider, sir, and without doubt you will recall what you say to me in this very room, just before we leave you.'

'I suppose it was in this room, if anywhere,' growled Mr Hythe; 'and now you mention it, I seem to think we did refer to it again. Well, I must have told you, and forgot about it; and was a fool for telling you, that is all.'

'That is all, certainly,' assented the other, with a cheerful, satisfied smile, as though he had just confirmed the speaker in the most flattering of assertions. 'I tell him, then, that the foreign person is dead. I shall tell him, as you advise, that she marry again, and live happy; that she tell me all about it, and ask me to find him if I ever go to England. To explain how I know him, I shall say I have find a letter addressed to him in his right name; I say this was among the foreign person's papers, and she think it refer to some one else. I think not—so I keep it, and see. I have find him by this; and now I find him, I tell him the person dead, and her baby dead too; that after he desert them, and she marry, she live seven years, and—I think this very fine point—she ask his forgiveness for having married again. Being, as I learn from your description, a gentleman of very honourable and sensitive feelings, easily moved to pity, and so on, I should think that would be very effective. Do you not agree?'

'Yes,' returned Hythe, after a pause, during which he had eyed the musician with a look of no great admiration—'yes, that will do. In fact, Mr Charles, or whatever your name is, you may say and do what you like, for it's my belief that the Evil One himself could not hold a candle to you.—That's plain speaking.'

'Ah, sir, you flatter me,' returned the musician. 'Yet, after all, it is but natural. We foreigners are cunning and deceitful, I know. I know it well; I have heard it said five hundred times since I have been among the English. Alas! it is our misfortune; we cannot equal their truth, their candour, their faithfulness. Certainly not! Well, good afternoon, sir. I shall now present myself to the Elmees Knoll, and hope to have much agreeable interview with your brother. Adieu, sir.'

Saying this, the musician bowed himself out, a good deal to the relief of Mr Hythe, who drew a long breath as he disappeared, and exclaimed in an undertone: 'Confound the fellow! I hate him worse every moment I am in his company. I compared him last night to a hyena. Some crawling poisonous snake would be more like him, to my thinking now. But he is just the man I want, for all that.'

The musician, on leaving Myrtle Villa, did not follow the high-road on his way to the Knoll, although this was the nearer, but took a somewhat devious path which led across the fields; and by the stile which bounded this path, and separated it from the main road, he found seated on a bench under a tree, evidently awaiting him, his landlady

and Lucile. With scarcely a word, he took the girl's hand and led her away, pausing, however, after crossing the stile, to make certain that the landlady had really gone back, and was not lingering to watch them. Apparently the girl was used to his silent mood, for she accompanied him without question until they reached the Elms Knoll gate. This the musician opened unhesitatingly, and went quickly towards the house. Some large shrubs stood outside the chief door of the building, so large and so close that it was impossible for any one in the house to see a person sheltered by them even if the door were opened. At the brief direction of her conductor, the girl stood quietly behind the trees while he knocked at the door, which was promptly opened by a maid-servant. In answer to the visitor's inquiry, he was informed that Mr Hythe was within. Giving his name as Mr Joinville, the musician requested the favour of a few minutes' interview on business. The maid civilly asked him to enter; but the musician preferred to wait where he was, until her return. When she did return with a message to the effect that Mr Hythe would be happy to see the gentleman, the servant was startled to see a girl standing by the visitor's side. 'May I ask the favour of the young lady being allowed to wait in the house until I have spoken to Mr Hythe?' said he.

'Certainly, sir,' replied the maid. 'I did not see the young lady at first, so did not mention her to Mr Hythe.'

'That is of no consequence,' returned Mr Joinville. 'If you will kindly take her in your charge, and let me know where I can find her in case Mr Hythe should desire to see her, I shall be much obliged.'

This was soon arranged; Lucile being taken into a parlour on the ground-floor, which doubtless served as the housekeeper's sitting-room, for here she found a middle-aged lady, to whom the servant paid much deference.

The musician was ushered into a library, where, surrounded by a chaos of papers and books, sat the worn, enfeebled figure of the master of the house. He looked up with an air of some curiosity as his visitor entered; but the weary, disappointed expression so common to his features, was not brightened or changed. The man was a stranger.

'You wished to see me on business, Mr Joinville,' he began; 'so I understand from the servant. Is it?'

'Excuse the interruption, sir,' said the stranger; 'but my name is not Joinville. I sent that in, being my professional name, thinking you might probably have heard of me as a musician.'

Mr Hythe shook his head with a slight, sad smile.

'It does not greatly matter,' said the other, seating himself in compliance with a gesture made by Mr Hythe, 'as my business here has certainly no reference to professional affairs.—I believe, Mr Hythe, you were married abroad, about twelve or fourteen years ago, to some foreign girl, Lucia; her Christian name was, if I am right?'

Hythe roused himself, and gazed with mingled surprise and alarm at the speaker; 'I was. Is your business connected with that?'

'Finding yourself saddled with a wife for whom you had ceased to care—quite properly, I grant—

and burdened with an infant whom you hated, as interfering with your prospects in England—quite properly on your part, I again grant, you left them to their fate in a country which was as foreign to them as to yourself.'

'You misunderstand, if you do not misrepresent what occurred,' interposed Hythe. 'I have borne with your comments so far, as you are the first man who has ever spoken to me concerning that painful period of my life. I own my wrongdoing; I bitterly regret it; I would give the world to restore the wife and child I lost. But my conduct was not so inhuman as you describe it.'

'Well, no; I daresay not—from your view; from what I perceive is the respectable, and therefore the British view of the case,' returned the other, in unmoved accents. 'But I believe the foreign girl had a different impression. She was of a violent temperament, as these foreigners, who know no better, often are; and she eventually hated you with an intensity equal to the fierceness of the love she bore you at first—women, you know, are always in extremes—and she cursed you in her dying hour.'

'Impossible!' cried Hythe. 'Badly as I behaved, she would never have done that. But even if she did, how could you have known it?'

'You will hear, sir. To tell you what I know, and how I knew it, is my business here,' said the stranger, dropping his half-mocking tone for one of greater earnestness. 'She had friends, but they were at a great distance. Robbed by those among whom you left her, she made her way under great privations, and through such trials and hardships as ought never to have fallen to any woman's lot, especially to one so dearly loved and tenderly nurtured as she had been. Among her relatives, Mr Hythe, she had a brother—a brother, who would have given his life to have saved her; and to him she came. He first believed she had erred, as women have erred too often; but he received her with his kindest love even then; and when he learnt the truth, he felt—But you shall hear more of his feeling presently. Her privations and her trials killed her; she died in his arms. To him she told her story; to his care she left her unprotected child. To him, also, she bequeathed her betrothal ring—a diamond which I here submit for your inspection.' He drew a ring from his pocket as he spoke. 'To him she intrusted her revenge. He was poor, very poor, sir, although not always had he been so; yet he resolved to visit England, and to spare no trouble to find out this man, and avenge his sister. He kept his word; he came to England accompanied by the child—your daughter.'

Hythe started, breathed quickly, while the gaze he fixed on the speaker's face grew wilder and more intense.

'You have, I believe, seen a portrait of this brother,' continued the musician; 'given to you by your wife. She was a foolish, trusting girl, as you too well know, and loved her brother dearly. His name, as you must often have read on the portrait, was Carlos Villada; he it is who is now in England—he it is who now speaks to you. I am Carlos Villada.'

Hythe thrust back his chair, drew a long breath, and fixed his eyes resolutely on the

stranger, as though expecting some violent movement.

'Oh, fear me not, sir!' exclaimed the musician, or Villada as we may now call him. 'It is true that I sought England to be my sister's avenger, and that, baffled by your change of name—you were Mr Hildred Wilstone in those days, you know—my search was unavailing, until an accident discovered you at this obscure town; but I find my purpose practically achieved. I have heard enough of you to know that your greatest punishment will be to live—to live consumed by remorse, and the unavailing desire to atone for the injury you have inflicted; a desire and remorse which shall be a hundredfold bitterer to you when you know how nearly it has been in your power to repair the wrong you have done. Yes; when you shall once, for the last, the only time, have seen your daughter, your only child; when she leaves your sight for ever, having once stood under the roof of your accursed house'—

'Under my roof! Is she here now?' cried Hythe. 'I do not doubt your story; I believe it, and will forgive all you have said, if you but tell me she is here!'

'You have your wish, sir, for she is here, and you shall see her,' returned Villada. Then rising, he opened the door of the room and called Lucile. The girl came at once; and the musician taking her hand, led her into the apartment. 'This, Mr Hythe,' continued Villada, 'is the daughter of the foreign person who called herself Lucia Wilstone. Does she resemble her?'

'Herself again!' gasped Hythe. He strove to rise from his chair, but sank back, and clasped his hands for a moment before his eyes. 'An instant,' he said, 'and I shall be myself again. Had you shown me one from the dead, you could not have thrilled me more!'

'You are satisfied, then?'—began the musician.

'I am.—Lucia! come to me! Let me beg a mother's pardon through her child,' entreated Hythe.—'You will not, cannot dream of taking her away?'

'She leaves your presence now, and for ever!' was the harsh return.

'She shall not! She is my child, and I dare you to remove her.—Lucia! I am your father! Come to me, my child.—I will not be stopped!'

Villada had thrown himself before the girl, and now thrust Hythe back with such force as to stagger him.

'Let the gentleman come to me, Carlos!' exclaimed the girl, speaking for the first time.

'I am sure he does not wish to harm me.'

'My child—my dear child! I am your father—your most unhappy father!' cried Hythe.—'Stand aside, sir!—Help!'

A brief struggle accompanied these exclamations, which, from the vengeful expression on the stranger's face, might have had some terrible termination, but the broken strength of Hythe gave way, and he fell unconscious into his chair. A glance was sufficient to assure Villada that he was really insensible; then grasping the child tightly by the wrist, he led her from the room and the house, telling the servant who opened the door that he thought her master was unwell.

The shadows had gathered; twilight was past

and gone, and night had come, while Mr Styles sat at the little parlour window of Back Church Row smoking his pipe, and looking anxiously for the appearance of the musician with the girl; for the landlady having returned without the child, had been obliged to tell how she had parted from her; and, to quote exactly from the current of Mr Styles's reflections, that gentleman was 'blessed if he could see what sort of game Charley was up to now. In fact, when you once got in with them foreigners, there was never any telling what would come of it.'

While sufficient light remained for him to distinguish figures at the corner where Back Church Row joined the larger thoroughfare, the Professor sat at the window and watched; but at last with a sigh, he drew down the blinds, turned away and lit the gas. He had not done this three minutes, before a knock was heard, a knock he well knew; and the next instant the musician entered, leading Lucile.

'I am glad to see you both,' exclaimed Styles; 'for I have been fancying all sorts of things.—Well, is it all right? Have you managed the business and got the money?'

'Money! Ha, ha, ha!' laughed the musician.—His laugh was so strange and wild, that Styles started and changed colour.—'Money! Better! I have had revenge! I have seen your Maurice Hythe, and he has seen me. He has seen the brother of the woman he deserted! He has seen her child—his child. I have left him to live! The miserable wretch is to live! Her brother has spared him—to live!'

'Yes, yes; I know,' said Styles uneasily. 'You were to represent her brother, of course; but in reality, did you?'

'Represent!' cried the other. 'Talk not to me of represent! I scorn and throw away all your poor plays and acting grimace! I have done with them for ever! We say farewell! We leave you for ever!'

'Are you mad?' exclaimed Styles, seriously alarmed by his associate's manner. 'Where is the twenty pounds? And what is the use of your talking about leaving me, when we are to open at Bingleton to-morrow, and when Lucile is article to me?'

'I leave you, Styles; Lucia leaves you,' continued the musician. 'We laugh at your articles; we laugh at your towns of Bingleton. We are revenged, Styles; that is enough! All is settled; we go.'

'But you can't—you shan't go like this!' exclaimed the hapless Professor. 'What am I to do? I can't keep my engagements; you must not!'

'Styles! Señor Styles,' said the other, dropping his voice, and speaking in a low, penetrating tone, which the Professor instinctively felt was dangerous; 'you will remain with your pipes and your beers, if you are wise; for if you hold out a hand to stay me, I will cut that hand off at the wrist; and you know it; I see you do. Ah! You will be careful of yourself, and run no risk. That is well!—Come, Lucia—Lucile no more. We quit for ever this wretched mimicry.'

'But where are you going with the child?' said Styles. 'You have no money. How will she live? Where will you take her?'

'Fate will decide,' replied the musician; 'our destiny may lie in this world or in the next. We go to fulfil it, whatever and wherever it is.' And with this they were gone.

QUEER CASES.

BY A SURGEON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THE old adage, that truth is stranger than fiction, is seldom verified in a more marked manner than by the annals of modern surgery. In these days of extirpation of spleens and kidneys, of skin-grafting—when not only new noses, lips, and eyelids owe their origin to plastic operations, but even artificial windpipes are attempted by surgical art—the prophecy of the American humorist, that we shall shortly go into a shop and get measured for a new set of 'works' with as much nonchalance as we now order a suit of clothes—to say nothing of false teeth and glass eyes—is not so very wild after all, looked at by analogy. In the following papers, I propose to relate some curious incidents and accidents of surgical practice, which, although on record in the literature of the profession, are not generally known to the public. Those instances in which no authority is quoted, have either occurred under my own observation, or have been related to me by various surgeons of eminence under whom I studied, as having happened within their personal experience.

When I was a student at St George's Hospital, a man was brought in one night with a compound fracture of the thigh-bone—that is to say, the bone was not only broken but exposed to view through a wound in the skin—a very serious state of affairs. He had been detected by the police in the act of stealing lead off the roof of an empty house in Pimlico; and being surprised and chased, had dropped into an area, and sustained the injury which occasioned his removal to the hospital instead of a police station. An unsuccessful attempt was made to save the limb; amputation was then performed; and after lingering some weeks, the patient died. So far there was nothing in the case to call for remark; but after death, a curious fact cropped up. This was the discovery, at the *post-mortem* examination, of a rough jagged piece of lead, weighing several ounces, in the stomach, which could not possibly have been swallowed after his reception into the ward. It must have been bolted by him in the fright and confusion of the chase, or possibly, may have been bitten off a larger fragment in his agony while he lay in the area; but however that might be, its presence had never been suspected; the man had never mentioned it; and it had set up no symptoms while he was under treatment. It is now preserved in the Museum of the Hospital, side by side with the famous half-sovereign which got into Brunel's windpipe, and which was extracted by Sir Benjamin Brodie by means of an operation, combined with the action of a swivelled table designed by the sufferer himself.

Some years ago, a poor woman was discovered lying dead on the floor of her room in a low part of Westminster, with such marks of violence upon her body—notably a deep longitudinal cut on

the head, which had incised the bone of the skull itself—as to point to the conclusion that she had been the victim of foul-play. Her husband was taken into custody, and put upon trial for murder. In making his defence, he accounted for the bruises, blood-stains, and other collateral evidence in various plausible ways; and for the scalp-wound by showing that the room was an attic with a broken skylight in the roof, and insinuating that a sharp-edged piece of glass must have fallen on his wife's head as she stood underneath. The surgeon who had been called in to view the body, in giving his evidence expressed his opinion that a piece of glass in falling would not have sufficient force to cut into a bone. Notwithstanding this and other facts tending to prove that there was no moral doubt as to the guilt of the accused, the balance of legal testimony against him was not strong enough to convict, and he escaped. The surgeon—long since risen to the top of the professional tree, and now a man of European reputation—was at that time curator of an Anatomical Museum, where, in the department devoted to Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, stood the skeleton of a cow. A few weeks after the trial above quoted, a violent thunderstorm, accompanied by hail, burst over London one night, and much damage was done; amongst other things, the Museum skylights were extensively shattered. When the curator arrived next morning, he found a spiculum of broken glass actually sticking upright in the very edge of one of the sharp prominences of bone—technically, the *spinous processes*—projecting from the vertebrae of the cow! I have often heard him narrate the incident at lecture, as a warning to young men against conclusions jumped at on the strength of preconceived ideas, instead of patient investigation and experiment. The wound in the woman's skull *might*, after all, have been produced by falling glass.

A lad was once admitted into St Bartholomew's Hospital upon whose head a brick had just fallen from a considerable height. He was wounded, bleeding, and insensible; and an examination with the probe revealed 'exposed bone'—that is, yielded the rough grating sensation characteristic of the head-bones from which the covering membrane has been rudely stripped. But there was no apparent fracture or depression of the skull, and the medical men were at a loss to account for the marked symptoms of compression of the brain, which became more and more apparent every minute. These grew so severe at length that it was determined to enlarge the wound in the scalp, and inspect the parts beneath. This having been done, the mystery was explained at once. A corner of the friable brick, pyramidal-shaped, had broken off, and was driven into the bone, the apex of the pyramid piercing it, and splintering it inwards; while the base actually filled up the aperture, and was just on a level with the surrounding bone; and this it was which had come in contact with the probe. The brick being removed and the bone elevated, the boy recovered.

Being dresser to Mr Pollock in May 1870, I was fortunate enough to have under my charge one of the first cases of skin-grafting performed in England. The idea had already been mooted in

Paris and Vienna, but had never been carried out successfully. It must be borne in mind that this so-called skin-grafting—a process nearly analogous to the sowing of seed in the earth for the reproduction of a plant—is not to be confounded with *transplantation* of skin, which has been practised from a very early date in the history of surgery. To cover a large raw sore, a flap of healthy skin has often been dissected from the adjacent part, leaving a pedicle of attachment to the surrounding surface; this, slid over or twisted round on to the wound, will stick and grow there, under favourable circumstances, receiving its life through the pedicle until it has formed a perfect attachment to the parts beneath. Noses are built up in the same way with three triangular flaps cut from the forehead and cheeks; and occasionally whole pieces of skin are taken bodily away from one part and transplanted to an unhealthy wound; the new sores caused by their removal being presumed to heal more rapidly than the ulcer. But these measures were not only severe in themselves, but resulted in many failures, and were attended with the disastrous condition, that a want of success left the patient in a doubly worse plight than before the operation. Grafting, however, is a wholly different thing; and perhaps a short account of the case to which I have alluded will convey a better idea of the process and its effects, than a dissertation on the mere physiology of the subject.

The patient, a pretty little girl of eight, was admitted into the Wellington ward of St George's Hospital with the history that, two years previously, her dress had caught fire, burning both legs from the hips to the knees severely. After a year's treatment the left thigh had healed up; but the right had never got better, and presented a terrible ulcer, extending all down the outer side. She was a bright intelligent little thing, and her sad condition excited much sympathetic interest. For four months she lay there without any signs of improvement. Though nourishing food, with wine and strengthening medicines, were freely administered, and all manner of local remedies applied, particularly that most excellent dressing, carded oakum, all was in vain; and when, on the 5th of May, the child was brought into the operating theatre, and placed under the influence of chloroform, it certainly appeared to us to be as unlikely a case to afford a fair criterion of a new treatment as could well be imagined. Two small pieces of skin were then snipped from the back with a pair of sharp-pointed scissors, and imbedded—planted, in fact—in the granulations or 'proud-flesh' of the wound—two tiny atoms, scarcely bigger than a pin's head, and consisting of little more than the cuticle or outer skin which we raise in blisters by rowing or exposure to a hot sun. Five days later, no change was visible; and by-and-by the operation was considered to have failed, since the pieces of skin had disappeared, instead of growing, as had been expected. But twelve days after the operation, two little white cicatrices appeared where the seeds had been sown; and in my notes I find that a week later these were big enough to be dignified as 'islands of new tissue.' The most wonderful part of it was that, not only did these

islands grow and increase rapidly in circumference, but the fact of their presence seemed to stimulate the ulcer itself, which forthwith took on a healing action around its margin. Several more grafts were implanted subsequently, including morsels from Mr Pollock's arm, from my own, and from the shoulder of a negro; the last producing a white scar-tissue like the rest. In two months the wound was healed, and the little patient was discharged cured.

Skin-grafting is now performed daily in surgical practice, and a special instrument—a combination of knife and scissors—has been invented for the purpose. It is impossible to estimate the immense benefit of this discovery to mankind in many different aspects. Poor people, hitherto incapacitated from labour by 'incurable' ulcers, and for years a burden on their parish, or inmates of workhouses and asylums, will now again resume their place in the great toiling hive, from whose daily work is distilled the prosperity of a nation. Von Gräfe's operation of iridectomy, whereby hundreds of people, who were formerly considered irremediably blind, are now restored to sight by a simple proceeding, is said to have exercised a very appreciable effect on the poor-rates of the country. As an instance of true transplantation, John Hunter's celebrated experiment of causing a human tooth to take root and grow in the comb of a cock, is a well-known instance. Dentists nowadays often remove teeth, and having excised diseased portions, replant them in their sockets with frequent, though not invariable success; and cruel plastic operations have been performed on rats, by which they have been joined like Siamese twins, or their tails caused to grow from their shoulders, or between their eyes. The late Mr Frank Buckland, in his *Curiosities of Natural History*, gives an amusing account of an action-at-law brought by M. Trignel, a French naturalist, against a Zouave who had sold him what was termed a 'trumpet-rat' for one hundred francs; the said trumpet-rat proving to be an ordinary 'varmint,' with the tip of another rat's tail planted in its nose, and growing there.

A watchmaker in Piccadilly was afflicted with suicidal mania of rather an extraordinary description. So far from seeking death as a refuge from trouble, it was only at such times as the world was running along smoothly with him that he was not to be trusted with lethal weapons. Did sickness or domestic affliction cast their shadow over him? did pecuniary embarrassment, or even the ordinary worries and vexations incidental to business, harass him? then there was not a saner man breathing, nor one better qualified to cope with his difficulties, and withstand manfully the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. But directly the 'bad time' was over, and his horizon was uncheckered with a single cloud, an irresistible propensity to destroy himself seemed to seize hold upon him. He had taken poison twice, had thrown himself into a canal, and had made an attempt to shoot himself, but all ineffectually. Several times he had been imprisoned, and once had spent some months in a lunatic asylum; but the very trouble which his act entailed upon himself appeared on each occasion to do away with all desire to repeat it. At length he cut

his throat so badly that for many months his life was despaired of; he recovered eventually, and expressed the greatest abhorrence of his conduct; but a small fistulous opening in the windpipe remained obstinately unclosed in spite of treatment, and became a source of great annoyance to him, rendering it necessary for him always to close it with the finger when he wanted to speak, and giving rise at times to dangerous attacks of inflammation. This went on for three years, during which time he steadily attended to his business, and was in conduct, conversation, and every other respect as rational a watermaker as might be encountered between John o' Groat's and Land's End. But a successful operation was performed at the end of that time; the aperture healed up; and the man was relieved of a distressing infirmity. Within two weeks, he left his shop one afternoon, and committed suicide, this time in determined earnest.

THE CONTENTED MAN.

THE unassuming cabbage growing up to maturity amidst the alternate showers and sunshine of spring, may be regarded as the prototype of the Contented Man. He would only be too glad if, like Joshua, he could make the sun and moon stand still; for, unmindful alike of the future and the past, he considers the present as his elysium. Change is hateful; it disturbs his placid repose, and casts a misty shadow of futurity into his sluggish mind. Through his roseate glasses he looks out upon the world and pronounces all things good; the thorns and the thistles are hidden from his view, and there remain but the flowers to rejoice his eyes and to gladden his nostrils. The works of sculptors, painters, and authors bear the marks of the individuality of their originators; and we all of us have a not unnatural tendency to liken the lot and dispositions of others to our own. The task must be an especially delightful one to the Contented Man, in the still but muddy waters of whose mind float only the well-fed gold and silver fish of fanciful prosperity. Thus it is evident that he can scarcely be endowed with a highly reflective nature, nor indeed with an unselfish one.

The misery in the world is sufficiently apparent for the blindest to see it, and sufficiently deep and widespread to make the least unsympathetic of mortals sorrowful, and to appeal to their feelings to alleviate it as far as possible. The man who is thoroughly contented must also be thoroughly selfish; and thus it is hardly matter for regret that there should be so little real contentment in the world. This so-called virtue is too frequently but a synonym for sloth, indifference to the feelings of others, and mental feebleness. It is not the stuff of which heroes are composed. No Contented Man has ever yet made, or ever will make, his mark in the world. He stolidly sits on the rung of life's ladder on which the accident of birth has placed him, and gazes above and below him with equal indifference. Why should he stir hand or foot? he asks himself. He has got all that he wants; though, should a chance wind bear any good thing in his way, he accepts it, provided that no trouble be essential to the act of acquisition. The 'toilers and moilers' are

in his opinion but silly fools in pursuit of some Will-o'-the-wisp of fortune, which will vanish, to leave them in the darkest slough of despond. He sees others go past him hand-over-hand up the ladder; but it is without a pang. And when some less fortunate stragglers around him are engulfed in the dark waters of ruin, and pray to him for a helping hand, he moves not an inch. Why should he? Is he not himself, contented?

'Hope springs eternal in the human breast,' but the Contented Man has nothing to do with hope—unless, indeed, it be that his condition may remain unchanged to the end of the chapter. Its bright star does not shine for him, and he is happy without it. He is a phosphorescent individual, emitting sufficient light for himself, though it may be darkness for others. Egotism is his salient characteristic; not an obtrusive egotism, for that would be much too energetic to accord with his disposition, but an egotism which is nevertheless none the less real. On the whole, he may be considered a comparatively harmless individual; and whilst doing no injury to others, he does them but little good. To be hurtful, requires a certain amount of the *potential*; and this the Contented Man does not possess. After the fashion of the chicken in the egg, he is provided with his own pabulum, and cares nothing about the outside world. Gallio is his model; and to drift with the tide, is his motto. But the time may come when the Contented Man finds all is not sunshine and balmy breezes; and when he does suddenly discover an incentive to action, it is to be feared that the capacity for undertaking it may have long disappeared. In the contest for the 'survival of the fittest,' the Contented Man will, like the sleepy old mammoth, become extinct.

RICHES AND FRIENDSHIP.

A CERTAIN man of vast estate,
And generous mind withal,
So freely spent it on his friends,
He soon had none at all.

His fickle friends discovered this,
And then their worth they showed;
They left him, nor e'en paid the debt
Of gratitude they owed.

Ere long the man got rich again—
Much richer than before;
And those who then received so much,
Came now—expecting more!

The man had by this time, howe'er,
A lesson great been taught;
And straight he sent them all away,
With the large sum of—naught!

Friends, he had learned, do round us flock
When we are rich and great;
But when want comes and troubles rise,
They leave us to our fate.

And he had learned what oft is seen
When friends are in request,
That those of whom we think the least,
Turn out to be the best.

J. H.

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A TENNESSEE SQUIRE.

THERE is perhaps no part of the United States where life goes on more calmly than in the region of the Cumberland Mountains, Tennessee. This beautiful wilderness is thinly peopled by a race of 'natives'—that is, white settlers and squatters, who are as unaffected by the fierce activities of their fellow-citizens in the Eastern and Western States as if they were inhabitants of another continent or men of another age. Their homesteads are remote from highways; and these highways are so little frequented, that weeks may pass without a stranger appearing. Having very imperfect means of transport for corn or cattle to paying markets, they grow just sufficient for their own use; and simple wants are easily satisfied in a subtropical climate.

Maize is the staple food, wheaten bread being rarely eaten. Swine-flesh of the toughest and least nutritious sort furnishes much of the animal food. Milk is little used. Intoxicating drinks are rarely partaken of, though a good deal of peach-brandy and corn-whisky are said to be made illicitly. But these are sold to saloon-keepers in by-places, and the money expended in powder, shot, and the few articles required for a primitive household.

Tea and coffee are the favourite stimulants of Tennessee natives, particularly the latter. When whisky is not made, game is sold at the nearest town to obtain what is needed; and often the hunter will go ten miles with a pair of deer-hams, half-a-dozen turkeys, rabbits, or other spoils of the chase; and glad is he to bring back a few pounds of green coffee in exchange.

Hunting is indeed the real business of the Cumberland Mountaineer, farming being a mere incident. To roam in the boundless wilderness with a long rifle, accompanied by a dog, is the occupation and the joy of the half-wild men of the Tennessee forests. Wonderful shots are they, rarely failing to bring the deer down by a bullet through the heart. But though loving solitude

more than society, the hunter is kindly, hospitable, and anything but a misanthrope.

In a sparsely peopled country where there are no hotels, the traveller must either carry a tent and provisions, or seek shelter and food from the dwellers in the land. I took the latter course; and never was refused the best that the house afforded. Many hosts repelled all attempts at payment; some even objected to be thanked. The system of demanding and giving hospitality is so common that it is never considered as a benefaction or a favour. What the squatter gives to-day, he himself may have to ask for to-morrow. Business, the chase, a political errand, sends him a day's journey from home, or leaves him belated. That causes him no disquietude. The wanderer goes to the nearest house, assured of a frank and hearty reception. It matters not that he is a stranger. He is received without embarrassment, with genial politeness. But it is necessary to observe that a change is coming over frontiersmen. A host of tramps are prowling over the United States, worse than their fellow-vagabonds in England, and perhaps more difficult to reclaim. The maraudings and brutalities of these men have made farmers suspicious, and chilled something of their native kindness. Still, the honest stranger is welcomed in a manner that compares favourably with the hospitality of cities; for in these remote wilds, poor people living hard lives, are more neighbourly than the inhabitants of London, Paris, or New York.

One of my pleasantest remembrances of Tennessee travel is connected with a short stay I made at the house of a certain Squire named Harker, who lived on a lonely road some distance from Jamestown. The weather was very hot, and my horse and self were tired with a five hours' rapid ride through forest and fell. It was nearing noon, the Tennessee dinner-hour, as I came in sight of the Squire's log-cabin, to which I had been directed by those who had marked out my itinerary. The barking of a great wolf-hound brought out the Squire. He appeared about sixty

years of age, tall, spare, and lithe as a young man. His hair was steel-gray, face close shaven, skin browned by weather; his eyes light blue, calm and benignant in expression.

'I come to ask for something to eat for my horse and myself,' I said.

'Yos, sir,' he replied, expectorating deliberately. 'Come in.'

With that he led my horse to a trough fed by a mountain stream; and afterwards put the tired animal into the stable, throwing before him some corn-cobs and a bit of coarse hay. Then we went towards the house.

Sitting by the fire was a woman, of dubious age, fifty-five or sixty-five. Although the weather was so hot, she was crouched over the blazing logs. Her face was yellow-olive in colour, thin to emaciation, haggard and wan. Her eyes had a dreamy quietude in them, like those of a person habituated to soothing drugs. Her figure was gaunt as a skeleton, and scantily draped in a faded cotton gown; the outline of her long angular limbs being rendered more observable by an obvious lameness. In her mouth was a long and much used clay-pipe, the bowl black as ebony. She paused an instant in her puffing as I entered, then proceeded to smoke without the least embarrassment.

In the chimney corner near to the mistress of the household stood a beautiful young girl of fifteen, tall as my host, slim as a poplar, with dark pensive eyes, pale olive complexion, and dark hair loosely gathered into a knot. She smiled a childish welcome, which had the effect of destroying the charm of her innocent beauty, for it displayed teeth repellently black. She did not reply to my inquiries respecting her health; for a sudden disquietude passed over her face; her dark dreamy eyes were suffused; she passed hastily to the door. Quick as light she extracted a quid of tobacco from her pretty mouth, and then returned to her mother's side. I tried to appear oblivious of these little incidents, and advanced to shake hands with a young man coming from an inner room. He was shorter and more squarely built than his parents and sister, but the contour of his face and his eyes left me in no doubt that he was the son of my host. A lump of tobacco was in his lower jaw, giving him the aspect of a man suffering from excessive gum-boil. He greeted me with kindly gentleness, and sat down.

The interior of the house was extremely rude. Evidently, from its dilapidation, the cabin had been built many years. The logs were blackened by the weather; the floor was patched and uneven; and through many a cranny the sunlight gloamed. Four beds were visible, two in the general room where I was, and two in a little room half-screened by a curtain. The beds were clean, covered with patchwork quilts, but humbler than the couches of our superior peasantry. A few thoroughly uncomfortable chairs were scattered about; a round table was in the middle of the floor; a rough culinary bench was under the window near the back-door. The fireplace was a stony chasm, without grate, oven, or other cooking apparatus. A large pot, like that used by gipsies, stood upon the hearth. Such was the furniture of this home in the wilderness.

I cannot say that the house was dirty, untidy,

or in any way wretched. It lacked altogether that snugness and comfort that English people associate with home. There was no sign of poverty, of that pathetic confession of a desperate fight with circumstances, so often seen in the neat homes of the poor in England. And the family had no semblance of being 'hard up.'

Mrs Harker was badly, meanly, scantily dressed, worse, indeed, than any labourer's wife in rural Britain. But she did not seem to be aware of it. Miss Harker wanted a new gown, better shoes, a competent hairbrush, and a general reformation in her ideas of attire, though evidently unconscious that she was at variance with correct standards of taste. The worthy Squire wore a pair of pants that had deserved retirement long ago. His shirt was coarse as sailcloth; and though clean, wanted the skill of an abler laundress than his household afforded. His Wellington boots, into which his pants were thrust, were hoary with the mud of years. Blacking is unknown in the Tennessee wilds, and is as superfluous as hair-powder. Shirt, pants, boots, comprised the whole costume of the Squire and his son; as gown, shoes, stockings, seemed to do for the ladies. Let no fastidious dame or scrupulous dandy find fault with such heretical notions of dress. I was myself at that time wearing simply shirt, trousers, and shoes, and feeling that these were a burden grievous to be borne. The temperature was ninety-eight degrees in the shade; in the sun, one hundred and twenty degrees. Teufelsdröckh might have learned something more of clothes-philosophy had he been Squire Harker's guest.

The doors and windows were wide open, permitting a faint current of air to pass through the room; air laden with the perfume of azaleas, growing like rank weeds in the forest, and with the faint odour of the prairie-rose. A humming of bees and buzzing of flies came rhythmically athwart the pauses in the conversation. Outside, the intense white sunlight glittered on every reflecting surface; and the ineffable violet sky soared to an immense height. Across it, here and there, swam rolls of snowy cloud, like pillows of carded wool. The remote firmament, the slow-gliding clouds, the hushing sun-glare, the droning insects, the quiet talk of my entertainers, the stillness of the forest, seemed all harmonious with the calm of a tropical noon.

Hurry here was impossible, rapidity of thought an absurdity, rapidity of action suicide. Life was a wakeful dream, in which to smoke lazily, to loiter serenely at the dawdling pace of Time hobbling along on padded sandals, were the only duties.

My hostess informed me that she had long suffered from ague and rheumatism. She had taken all sorts of doctor's stuff, but with little relief. She rose to fetch the bottle containing her medicine, and then I saw how lame she was. Her left hip appeared to have lost its power of articulation. She moved with pain and difficulty, using a strong stick. I was very sorry for her, and we soon became confidential. In talking over remedies, it was clear that the quack was mighty in the land, and that Mrs. Harker had suffered much therefrom. And the schoolmaster was feeble. The commonest news of the time was unknown to the family, or had

filtered in by small drops of hearsay. All literary, scientific, or other culture was absent from this household. I was nonplussed at every step, having to begin *de novo* with almost every topic. But I thoroughly interested my friends, who began to look upon me as an extraordinary person, when I tried to explain the genesis of malaria and rheumatism. Diseases were accepted by the Squire's family as mysteries, which no knowledge could fathom, and which medicine could only mitigate.

'I guess you'll like to eat?' said Mrs Harker after a while.—'Get dinner ready, Susan.' This to the daughter.

During the conversation, which was not interrupted, I observed how the meal was prepared; indeed, I could not help it, as it went on under my eyes. After throwing more wood on the fire, Miss Harker half-filled a tin bowl with Indian meal; into it was dredged some 'raising-powder'; water was added, and a paste made in a few minutes. The pot on the hearth was partly filled with hot ashes, and small lumps of dough placed on them; the lid was put on, and the bread-baking was in process. A kettle was placed on the fire, and while the water was heating, the coffee was ground. Afterwards, thick slices of bacon were cut from a rusty fitch, that looked like a section from a pine-slab. A huge heavy frying-pan was filled with the bacon, placed on the fire; and soon the odours of the pan pervaded the room, effectually overwhelming the fragrance of the azaleas and roses. Meantime, from a hidden storeroom, an up-piled dish of apple-jam was brought, and a strange-looking substance resembling cream-cheese. A few cracked cups, plates, and small dishes, very heavy and thick, furnished the table equipage.

The meal was soon prepared; and I took the place assigned me by my host, who immediately sat down on the one side of me, his son taking the other. I waited for the ladies to take their places; but they showed no disposition to do so. Feeling uncomfortable, I ventured to suggest that Mrs Harker should take my seat, which seemed to surprise my friends. No; the women would dine afterwards. The Squire did the honours of the table in a generous fashion, piling my plate with bacon, filling my dish with jam, and pressing the hot cakes upon me. Miss Harker supplied the coffee. Her mother continued to smoke and talk in the chimney corner.

The experience I had subsequently of Tennessee manners and customs showed that the Squire's family was much like others. In no instance did mothers and young children sit down with the father, elder boys, and myself. The old paternal system, which has almost died out in Western Europe, flourishes in the American wilds. No doubt, when strictly *en famille*, the members of the household eat together; but before guests, mothers and youngsters retire into that subjection out of which the race has slowly emerged. But there was no brutal ignoring of the feeble members of the family, no attempt to pass them by. Politeness towards the stranger and the devotion of the host to his guest, seemed to be the reason for this arrangement. I must say, however, that hospitality loses much of its charm when women and children become servitors

and spectators instead of fellow-banqueters. And in the settled parts of America there is such an equality in the family; that I found the squatter's custom more singular than if I had been in another country.

I had made acquaintance with American 'pork' prior to meeting it at my host's table. Its harsh fibre, its rancid fat, its want of all that is gracious in looks and in flavour, and particularly its immense demands upon gastric energy, were well known to me. But it was the *pièce de résistance*, and must be eaten. The cream-cheese turned out to be butter, such as would have made an English dairymaid stagger, and British butter-eaters grateful for oleomargarine or other product of the chemist's workshop. Out of respect for its author Miss Harker, and at the pressing request of her father, I strove to do it justice, but failed totally after one trial. Few people in our islands are condemned to 'corn-bread'; and I sincerely congratulate them. It is altogether wanting in the charm and the sustenance found in our staff of life. Perhaps were it fermented and baked like our wheaten bread, it might be more agreeable and nourishing. The cakes prepared by the hands of my young hostess left much to be desired, not for me, but for herself and family, who had to eat them three times a day for life. The apple jam was neither sweet, sour, nor savoury—the completest neutrality in preserved fruits I had ever tasted. Sugar is dear in the United States, and many other plants besides 'cane' are utilised for obtaining saccharine matter. One of these is sorghum, much cultivated in the South; and I suppose my hostess had preserved her apples by this means.

Coffee strong, fragrant, and abundant, was the refreshing and invigorating item in the dinner. Its excellence atoned for a multitude of culinary foibles and failures; and though unsupported by sugar, cream, or milk, it was a tower of strength in itself. Coffee plays an important part in frontier-life, and will advance in estimation as whisky recedes. A generation of farmers, squatters, and pioneers is growing up to whom alcohol is objectionable in any form. A solid rock of opinion is rising against strong drink in every part of America, and I found it nowhere more pronounced than in the Tennessee Highlands. Coffee gives all the stimulant the climate requires.

Dinner being over, the Squire and I went out to see how my horse was faring; then we went to see his tobacco-field, about which we had talked during the meal. Outside the house, everything was as untidy and neglected as within. Under a shed lay a rusty plough, traces, chains, harness, and other gear. A broken wagon was slowly disintegrating in one corner, a mud-splashed rickety buggy in another. An ancient loom was in an empty stall. Corn-cobs, maize-litter, and rubbish from cowhouse and stable, were lying in the yard in every stage of decay. A dismantled snake-fence had once separated this yard from the peach-orchard; but storms and rot had made many gaps, through which gaunt hogs prowled at will. Neglected as the trees were, they were thick with fruit, promising a crop that would have made a little fortune in Covent Garden. But the largest proportion of the peaches was destined

for the Squire's hogs. About fifty magnificent apple-trees were in another orchard, literally bearing as much fruit as leaves. Such trees are impossible in England. The Squire was not enthusiastic in his admiration of peaches and apples, listening to my remarks upon the coming harvest with genial indifference.

Beyond the orchards was a field of maize, so roughly cultivated, that the hogs might have made the furrows, except that there was some attempt at straight and continuous lines. A few days' work had sufficed for ploughing and sowing; a few days' labour would gather the corn; then the Squire's duties as a husbandman would be fully discharged.

Near the maize-field was the tobacco-patch, covered with vigorous plants, upon which the owner glanced with a complacent eye. Beside them was a long strip of cotton-plants revelling in the sun, but sorely hampered with weeds. Cotton was grown to supply the family wants, the women picking, spinning, weaving, dyeing, and making the garments. About half an acre of potatoes completed my host's cultivated land.

It is not considered impertinent to ask a land-owner in America the extent of his possessions; and in reply to my inquiry, the Squire told me he owned about eight hundred acres. Not one hundredth part of this was tilled; but that did not strike Mr Harker as uneconomical.

What surprised me most was the absence of a kitchen garden. No salads, no cabbages, no beans or peas, none of the herbs cultivated by the peasants of Europe. And not one cultivated flower, save the rosebush by the front-door, and that appeared to be an accident. A ragged, ignored vine scrambled over a corner of the house, the only natural embellishment.

Such was the home of Squire Harker, a justice of the peace, an intelligent man, a sober, industrious American citizen, in whose veins ran the impulsive, domineering Anglo-Saxon blood. Sequestration from society, the infatuations of a hunter's life, want of culture, had made him indifferent to the hopes and ambitions of his age. He had his compensations in such health and vigour as no city dweller can know; he had, too, a peace of mind that passes the understanding of this restless age. He bore his sixty years with greater ease than many an Englishman half the number. He enjoyed the present hour calmly, and looked with absolute undismay at on-coming age, confident in himself and trusting in Providence.

But it was different with his wife and daughter; theirs was the fate of the squaw, mitigated by the tendency of the race. Life for them and others similarly situated, was a narrow and unembellished drudgery, though not of killing hardship. Rude and monotonous diet, which suited hunters, destroyed all the graces and sapped the vitality of the women. Rarely did they quit the precincts of the house; there was no change of scene for them, save the leafing and unleaving of the forest. They had work enough to keep the mind from stagnating, but not varied sufficiently to excite invention, not severe enough to rouse slumbering energies. Fancy had no exercise, and thus speech was ungraced by the common elegancies of language. By the way, it is remarkable how taciturn and slow of utterance the backwoods people are.

Vacancy of mind, deficient exercise of the imagination, and loneliness, tempt many of these women to seek the soothing delights of tobacco. The perfidious anodyne becomes a tyrant necessity, and damages the health, ruins the beauty, and increases the torpor of soul. America is said to be the land of faded matrons. But from my own observation, I believe improper diet, especially the invariable 'hot biscuit,' does more damage to face and figure than the rigours of climate. Bad water, malaria and various febrile diseases do great mischief to form and colour; but rough and ungraceful homes are greater foes to female loveliness. I have seen ladies of middle age, who have lived in superheated rooms amid the excitements of New York's perverid existence, confirmed toppers of ice-water and devourers of 'candy,' who were nevertheless quite as well preserved as English ladies of the same age.

The fact is, women need the society of their own sex more than men. Body and mind degenerate for want of sympathy, criticism, and emulation. Six months' residence in Cincinnati would have developed Miss Harker into a brilliant young lady, as incapable of chewing a 'quid' as of cannibalism; and the same environment would have cured her mother of the languors and vapours which oppressed her like an atmosphere of carbonic acid. The progress of civilisation in America, in another half-century, will render the fate of women wholly free from the privations endured by Squire Harker's worthy wife and charming daughter.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—I HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING YOU, SIR, ONE HOT DAY LAST SUMMER, WHEN YOU PAID ME THIS IDENTICAL HALF-SOVEREIGN.

GERARD, grasping Hiram tightly by both arms, faced him beneath the gaslight. Hiram, scarcely understanding as yet who had got hold of him, faced Gerard. The two looked at each other curiously.

'I reckon, mister,' said Hiram, 'that you've made some sort of error.'

Gerard seemed to be of that opinion too, if his face were trustworthy. As to who Hiram might be, he had not at that moment the remotest notion.

'Perhaps I have,' he answered, with a touch of dubious sarcasm in his tone. 'We shall see.' He released Hiram, and warned him. 'Stand there. If you attempt to make a move, I'll throw you out of the window.'

'Then,' responded Hiram, 'I will not attempt to make a move. Your diggings air too lofty.' He kept his eyes on Gerard, but stooped for his hat, warily, and having secured it, brushed it with his elbow, and set it on, a little on one side. Gerard, regarding him, stepped sideways to the letter-box and took out the packet. He knew by the look and feel of it what it was; but he was in a mood to do strict justice. He opened the package, therefore, and found the half-crown in it, and the inscription on the paper, as before.

'Now,' he asked, tossing the half-crown on the table, and looking dangerously at Hiram, 'who set you to do this? Don't prevaricate with me, or I'll break every bone in your body. Tell me who sent you here with these insolent messages.'—Hiram returned no answer, but held him with his glittering eye, watchful of every movement.—'Out with it!' cried Gerard.

'Keep your hair on,' returned Hiram, in a tone of soft expostulation. 'You're in no hurry to get bald.'—Gerard made a swift motion towards him. Hiram made a swifter in retreat. The two being on either side a round table of considerable size, it was not easy to get at close quarters, unless both were so minded. Hiram in his flight contrived to possess himself of a poker, and held it in an attitude of defence; improvised and amateurish, but unpleasant for an assailant to look at. Gerard, even in his heat of anger, recognised the loss of dignity inevitably accruing to a chase around the circular table, and stood still, devising means of approach. Hiram took advantage of this pause, and prepared to offer suasive counsel. 'This is not a reception,' he began, 'calculated to feed the enthusiasm of affection.' At that second, Gerard vaulted the table, closed with him, and wrested the poker from his grasp. Hiram, more fortunate than in their first encounter, eluded his hold, but left a portion of his coat behind. 'Look here!' said Hiram from the other side of the table; 'you ridiculous madman. What do you mean by it?'

'Who sent you here?' cried Gerard again.

'Nobody sent me here.'

'What do you mean by dropping these confounded things in my letter-box three nights running? Who are you?'

'Now,' responded Hiram, in soothing tones, 'this is reasonable. If you'll put that poker down and listen to reason, I'll explain. And if you won't, and will insist on strife, I ain't goin' to let you maul me how you like—mind that. I'm loath to hurt you, and bein' a sensible man myself, I am not hungry to be hurt. You don't know me?'

'I don't know you from Adam.'

'I am not Adam. I had the pleasure of meeting you, sir, ten miles from Brierham, one hot day last summer, when you paid me this identical half-sovereign for carrying a note to Valentine Strange, Esquire.'

'Well?'

'Well. You may remember I told you that you had given me the only streak of luck I had ever had since I landed on these shores. You may recall likewise, that I remarked that if ever you were in a real hole, you might do worse than apply to Hiram Search.'

'Well?' This reiterated inquiry began to assume a dogged and threatening tone.

'I am beginning to see,' continued Hiram, 'that thistles are my proper diet. I own up, straight, that if anybody had offered me help on the sly like this, I should have rode rusty with him. But if you think that my half-crowns are so plentiful that I can afford to play jokes with 'em, you are prob'ly a greater ass than I am. Mister, let me lay it out straight for you. You helped me, when you was that squeezed in with money you could hardly move. Then

I happened to read in the papers about Garling—I won't distress you if I can help it—then you happened to come and dine at my employer's restaurant—I was that mudheaded—Well, now, between man an' man, you can't ask more. I'm sorry I offended. You can call me anything you like, if it relieves you. I deserve to be kicked, though I should not, as a friend, advise you, or any man to kick me. I apologise with all my heart; and if you fancy that I am mean enough to have offended you willingly, you do me a greater wrong, sir, than I have offered you.'

There was positively a real dignity in Hiram's tone as he concluded. His manner was conciliatory, frank, independent, yet submissive, as became his apology.

But Gerard was an Englishman, and was not going to be conciliated all on a sudden by any man alive. 'Couldn't you guess, you blundering idiot,' he said roughly, 'that you could do nothing more offensive, nothing more insulting?' He was very favourably impressed with Hiram, or he would not have bestowed a word upon him.

The other felt a sort of amity in the rough words and tones, and half unconsciously advanced to meet it. 'Let me make my excuses as clear as I know how,' he said. 'It's partly the smallness of the sum that aggravates the natural feelings of the British aristocrat.'—Gerard laughed outright, his first laugh for six weeks.—'It is indeed,' said Hiram. 'Seriously now, it is. There never was anything I tried to do with my fingers I couldn't manage, worse or better; but in respect to feelings, I haven't got a sense of touch at all, and that's a fact. But now, look here! I am real grieved, but—Look here! Don't you mind me because I can't grease it and make it run smooth, and scent it and make it smell nice. You helped me, and you told me a lie when you did it. Yes, sir. Says you: "I've got no silver, dern it all;" and I saw the shine of silver in your purse. Then says you again: "I suppose you don't earn half a sovereign so easy every day;" and you put that rather harsh, to save my feelings and make me think it wasn't charity. I've thought of that often; and I've said to myself: "Send that man round to me if ever he's in trouble, and I am game to my bottom dollar." I have not your sense of touch, sir, in these matters, but I was deeply grateful, and I've had a liking for you ever since. I took a foolish way of showin' it, and hurt your feelings. But now, I've apologised, and you have looked over my clumsiness, and now—clean straight—I'm worth five pound. Is half of that any use to you?'

'My good fellow,' said Gerard haughtily, 'you are quite mistaken in supposing that I am in want of money. If I were, I should find other means of getting it, than by taking your earnings from you.' He was somewhat touched, in spite of his hauteur. Perhaps he was a little loftier in manner because he was touched, and did not care to show it. He read incredulity in Hiram's face; and to put an end to his doubts, he sent his hand into his pocket and drew out a mingled handful of gold and silver. 'I am not in immediate danger of starvation,' he said lightly and in a kinder tone.—Hiram felt the friendliness of this revelation, instinctively. He did not stop to think it out, but he knew that Gerard

would rather have submitted to any misapprehension, than clear it in this way unless at the bidding of an impulse altogether friendly.—'You are a good fellow, Search,' said the gentleman, reaching out his right hand. 'You misunderstood my position—that was all.'

Hiram pushed out his lean claw at arm's length and executed a solemn shake-hands.

'I am glad to see,' he answered, 'that I am not such an ass as I thought I was. You laughed just now when I called you an aristocrat. But I was not mistaken.'

Gerard laughed again. 'This open expression of opinion is a little embarrassing, Mr Search.'

'I beg your pardon,' said Hiram gravely; 'I will not offend again. I have not your sense of touch, sir. I am not an educated man, and I am not acquainted with the ways of society. But I will not offend again.'

'What have you been doing since I saw you last?' asked Gerard, anxious to atone for his misunderstanding of Hiram's gratitude. The man's downright simplicity and truthfulness attracted him. Hiram began to tell his story. Neither of them noticed that the outer door had all this time been left unfastened, until, in the midst of Hiram's narrative, a great hammering began upon it, and Gerard arising to open it, met Val Strange and the lawyer in the lobby.

'Mr Lumby,' said the old lawyer, directly he set eyes upon him, 'let me congratulate you! We have recovered everything that villain Gerling ran away with. You are a wealthy man once more.' This was a burst of singular indiscretion for so discreet a man; but the old boy had had the news pent in him for ten minutes; he had been a dear friend and old schoolfellow of Gerard's grandfather; he had been his father's adviser this thirty years past or nearly; and he was more puffed out and explosive with joy and triumph than a legal authority of threescore years and ten can endure to be with safety.

The result of the communication thus made was alarming; and Gerard, beneath the little gaslight in the lobby, turned so pale, and made so blind a clutch at the doorpost, that the lawyer caught him on one side, and Val Strange on the other, and led him back into the room, where he sank into a chair, hid his face in his hands, and sobbed hysterically.

'Really, my dear Gerard,' said the little old lawyer, standing over him, patting his shoulder, and trying to cover his own error by disregarding the effect it had upon the other, 'we must have a little jollification on the strength of this discovery. Really we must. Perrier-Jouet must flow for this, sir. Pommery-Greno?—the life-blood of the Widow Clicquot?—what shall it be?' All this time, he was patting and smoothing away at Gerard's shoulder.—'Mr Strange,' he cried, not ceasing this friendly attention for a minute, 'we ought to have supplied ourselves upon the way. It is all due to our friend Mr Strange, under Providence, that this amazing discovery was made, Gerard. Your friend Mr Strange is answerable for it.—Come, come, come; you'll get up and say "Thank you" to Mr Strange, surely. A quarter of a million is worth saying "Thank you" for. Come, come, come.' Running on thus, to a Gerard's confusion and his own, he patted

and soothed until Gerard raised a pale face and looked around him.

'What hit me,' he said, 'was the thought of the poor old governor. If it all came back, it would be too late for him.'

'No, no, no!' cried the little lawyer. 'Let us hope not—let us hope not. Let us trust in Providence. He will recover, and spend many happy years, I trust—many, many happy years.' And that ancient lawyer, in spite of his face of parchment, and the legal inner dust of fifty years, sat down and wept for joy. In all his threescore years and ten he had known no greater grief than the fall of the great House. A placid equable life of threescore years and ten, with a little love-making in it, so far back that his old love's grandchildren were common-councilmen, and nothing to mark its even tenor since those far-off days, but two strong friendships. The two dearest friends he had ever had were Gerard's grandfather and father. Why should he not feel a touch of sacred, friendly joy again? But the old man's emotion killed Gerard's; so far as show was concerned at least. The two young men shook hands with each other and with the lawyer; and he, conscious of human frailty, made great efforts, and pulled himself together, and the three sent out for wine, and made bright speeches, and tried to be merry—with the ghosts about them. Constance for Val's ghost. Gerard's father with wrecked intellect and blighted life for the old lawyer's. Both for Gerard, and his pale mother seated between the two. And so the wine ran dull somehow in spite of its sparkle, and suddenly Gerard, in his attempt to be gay, bethought him of Mr Search, and made inquiry for him. Hiram had disappeared.

Hiram indeed was by this time in his own lodgings, pulling at the black clay by the side of a guttering tallow-candle. 'I am glad of his luck,' he said heartily; 'and it's a sort of weight off of me somehow that Mary's father has dropped that ill-got load. I'd have liked to have congratulated him; but I daren't stop for a word. It might pay a waiter too well to look honest, to congratulate a millionaire, when you've just lent him seven-and-sixpence.'

When a second bottle had been opened, and one libation poured to Fortune, the lawyer took his leave, and the two young men remained together. Val was very bitter inwardly, and Gerard's thanks were wormwood to him. Gerard was all gratitude and grief and hope, a very compound of contradictory emotion; Val, all rage, watchfulness, and despair. In his weakness, he was for a moment enraged at his own fealty to honour. Why should he have played such a card as he held into Gerard's hands, until he was sure of his own end? He was keenly on the watch to draw forth or catch the news of Constance's whereabouts. He half despaired of winning now, for he had cast the winning card away, and so for once he drank deeply, talking the while with a feverish attempt at gaiety, and pushing the conversation, whenever he could, in the direction of Gerard's hopes. For a long time, nothing came of this, but at last Gerard said: 'I shall cross to Paris to-morrow, after seeing the governor.'

'Ah!' responded Val, with well-concealed interest. 'What is going on there?'

'Why,' said simple Gerard, 'you know of course that when this smash came, I was engaged to be married. That went by the board, with everything else. And now it's the only thing I care for, that it sets me right in that respect again. We shall have to divide with my cousins, of course—the poor old governor is out of it for ever, I am afraid—but I shall have enough left. You heard what was said just now. Their share is not more than fifty thousand apiece. That leaves a hundred and thirty-three thousand to the governor, and the old house and my mother's property, besides what is saved from the smash. We are as well off as ever, thanks to you, old fellow. We haven't as much money, of course, but we have more than we shall ever want to spend.'

'And so you're going to Paris to-morrow?' said Val, bringing the conversation round again. It was horrible to listen to Gerard's talk of certainty, but he must listen, to learn what he wanted to know.

'Yes,' said Gerard. 'I shall see my mother in the morning, and break the news to her, and see the governor, and then cross over.'

'Are they all staying there?' asked Val, pouring out a glass of wine, and pressing the neck of the bottle tightly against the glass, to prevent them from clanking in his agitated hands.

'Yes,' responded Gerard. 'Constance has not been well lately, and Miss Jolly—that's her aunt, you know—insisted on going to Paris for a change.'

'Where are they?' asked Val. His voice veiled his own tremor and despair so ill, that he was almost amazed to see it go unnoticed.

'At the Grand Hotel,' Gerard answered; and being no further questioned, slipped into silence.

Val sat on thorns a while, and then took leave. Once in the street, he ran until he found a hansom, and was driven to his chambers at full speed. His luggage was undisturbed. He bade his man carry it out to the hansom, and side by side with his valet, drove to St Katherine's Docks. The boat for Boulogne started that night at eleven-thirty, and was caught at the moment of departure. An eighteen hours' passage would land him at Boulogne at half-past five, in time for the six o'clock slow train for Paris. Even that gave him some faint hope of seeing Constance before she retired for the night. Gerard, starting on the morrow, would leave Charing Cross at half-past seven in the evening, would reach Paris at six in the morning, and would possibly go to bed to snatch a few hours' sleep. There loomed another chance.

Half the gloomy night, Val paced the deck; and at last, with a greatcoat and a rug, lay down upon it, beneath the clouds and the solemn rifts between them sown with earnest stars. There was but half an hour to win by, and the thought kept him awake, in a panic of hope and fear. Slowly the stars faded; the intense depths of sky grew gray; the clouds, which had been gray, grew black; the bleak sunlight touched the sulky Channel billows. He rose again, and paced the deck, and looked at the Kentish coast, still in sight, and sickened for the journey's end. All day long, time crawled, and his veins fevered, and his watch seemed to stand still. But five

o'clock saw Boulogne harbour; and then, whilst the hands of the watch suddenly ran with great rapidity, the boat seemed to crawl on the water. Half-past five, and the harbour scarcely seemed nearer. At six minutes to six they moored beside the Port, but on the wrong side for the railway station. Seven minutes later, Val stood upon the platform, and looked after the last carriage of the retreating train.

He waited with racked patience for the next train. Perhaps after all Gerard might miss it—might somehow be delayed. The slow deliberate seconds, the leaden-footed minutes, the dreary, dreary hours, went by. The mail-train drew up at the platform, and he took his seat. Everything was silent, and the place seemed asleep, until the sudden flare of gas and the sudden rush of storming feet, told the arrival of the mail passengers. He would not look to see if Gerard were there or not. Fortune had been against him all along, and would be against him still. He set up the big collar of his travelling-coat, and pulled his cap down upon his eyes, to escape a possible recognition. The clamour and bustle died away on the platform. The signal sounded. The carriage answered with a jerk to the first motion of the engine, and at that instant a passenger opened the door of the compartment in which Val sat, and leaped in lightly. It was Gerard Lumby.

(To be continued.)

QUEER CASES.

BY A SURGEON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

WHAT is more troublesome to surgeon or patient than a needle broken off short in the flesh—unless it be two broken needles? Such articles 'travel' terribly. There is so little to lay hold of with the forceps, that any touch which does not effect its extraction is bound to give it an onward impulse. Thus it often happens that a medical practitioner can find no trace of the needle, when his assistance is sought, the patient having already pushed it completely in, in his efforts to withdraw it; and it may become a matter of doubt whether such a thing is really underneath the skin or not. To cut open the flesh on a mere chance of finding it, would be obviously unjustifiable; examination of the part by pressure and squeezing is nearly as bad, from the risk of making matters worse; so an ingenious plan has been devised for ascertaining whether a portion be really impacted or not. A powerful magnet is held upon that part of the body for a quarter of an hour, so as to influence the fragment; then a finely-hung polarised needle is suspended over it, when, if any iron be present, deflection will ensue. In Italy, a kind of ivory probe traversed by two wires has been used for the detection of foreign bodies of this nature in a deep wound, it being connected with an electric battery in such a way that directly the probe comes in contact with anything metallic, the circuit is completed, and its presence announced by the ringing of a bell!

Not many years ago, a remarkable experiment

was tried at the Hôpital dos Lazaros, São Christovão, near Rio de Janeiro. A Brazilian physician pretended to have discovered that 'beriberi,' the mysterious and deadly malady of that country, half-dropsy, half-leprosy, was identical with the true *Elephantiasis Græcorum*, which the ancient exponents of the healing art used to cure by inoculations of snake-venom. An inmate of the hospital, knowing his state to be hopeless as it stood, consented to allow the trial to be made on his body. So a vigorous rattlesnake was accordingly brought to his bedside, and made to bite his swollen and hypertrophied hand, in the presence of a large number of doctors, both native and foreign. It was noted at the time that the reptile displayed great apparent reluctance to use its fangs, and it was not until after much irritation that it could be induced to strike. The punctures were inflicted near the base of the little finger; but the patient was not aware that he had been bitten till the bystanders told him, so lifeless was the part. For some hours, no results were apparent; the characteristic evidences of blood-poisoning nevertheless set in, and before night the man was a corpse.

The case excited a great deal of interest at the time; but the experiment has never been repeated; nor is there any reason why it should be. The reception of the venom into a mass of fibroid and degenerate tissue such as would compose a lopsided limb, would retard and might altogether prevent its absorption into the current of the circulation; while it was pure fancy to attribute the snake's hesitation in biting to anything connected with the disease. Many poisonous reptiles will bear much annoyance, and even ill-treatment, before they can be persuaded to use their fangs; and the case in question really presents no anomalies whatever beyond those to be readily accounted for by the existing circumstances. But what a marvellous thing the venom of a serpent is! In the whole range of pathology, probably nothing presents such an instance of small causes producing great effects. An infinitesimal quantity of a clear, apparently harmless fluid, introduced by a puncture no bigger than the prick of a pin, and with awful rapidity—a few minutes, it may be—a strong man with the thews and sinews of a bull, becomes lifeless clay, already far on its way to decomposition. Perhaps the 'germs'—if such really exist—of deadly fevers and other maladies might be found to be just as insignificant in amount, could they be isolated; but it must be borne in mind that there is a certain period of 'latency' or 'incubation' after their reception into the system, and that neither they nor almost any other known poison take effect with the same fearful celerity as the worst snake-venoms.

The accidents, fortunate and unfortunate, that have occurred within the practice of celebrated surgeons about whose skill there can be no two opinions, would fill a volume. Dupuytren plunged a knife into a man's brain, and relieved him of an abscess in that situation, snatching him from the very jaws of death; yet he killed a patient whose shoulder-joint he had set, by lancing an aneurism in mistake for a simple gathering. And for every such accident which has happened, probably a hundred might be

found, were the truth known, that have been prevented only by what we are accustomed profanely to term 'sheer luck' or 'chance.' I was once clinical pupil of a great London surgeon, one who even then was quoted universally as the greatest authority on the disease of which the case I am going to relate was an instance, and whose public appointments had long testified to the general recognition of his talents. In one ward of the hospital he had a patient who, he told us, was suffering from an abscess in the region of the hip; carefully demonstrating this to us, as he was wont to do, and explaining how such a disorder was to be diagnosed from other things with which a want of due precaution might cause it to be confounded. He then ordered me to get ready his instruments and chloroform by the bedside, as he proposed to incise the swelling when he had finished his round of visits in the hospital, and proceeded on his way; but before he returned, the man suddenly and mysteriously died, without a movement or a groan. There was a *post-mortem* examination of course; and it was then found that what had been mistaken for an abscess was in reality an aneurism, which had burst of itself internally, and caused instant death by loss of blood. An aneurism is a localised dilatation of an artery, which goes on increasing in size quite out of proportion to the blood-vessel itself, so that the sac may be as big as an orange—as it was in this case—or even larger, upon an artery no bigger than a goose-quill. The chief danger in such a tumour lies in the possibility of its bursting at any time, and to lance it would, of course, be almost necessarily immediately fatal. 'Gentlemen,' said our Professor, as the mystery was revealed, and the terrible position from which he had so narrowly escaped became apparent, 'the French have a proverb that there is a special providence for drunkards and children. I say there is a special providence for surgeons!'

Nature is a wonderful surgeon; she commences a conservative process of repair directly after an injury. 'Never too late to mend,' is her motto. An old man, of the enormous age of one hundred and two, came under my notice with a broken hip—that commonest of fractures among elderly people, whose bones are dry and brittle, often caused by accidents so slight as tripping the foot in a loose fold of carpet. No active treatment could be adopted; mechanical appliances would have caused mortification of the skin in a subject enfeebled by senile decay; so he was placed on a water-bed and kept wholly at rest. He lay there for twelve months, suffering but little pain, and then peacefully passed away, having ended his long life in comparative comfort. After death, it was found that the fracture had actually healed, though naturally in a false position.

A disagreeable little *contre-temps* happens sometimes to young practitioners who are called upon for the first time to set a dislocated jaw. It rarely happens twice to the same operator. When the jaw is 'put out,' the hands, to effect its reduction, must grasp it over the teeth as far back as possible, so as to exert force in the necessary direction on the angle. It is often no easy matter; but when it does slip in, it goes back so suddenly that the mouth shuts to with a snap like a rat-trap; and the young surgeon

draws an inference that for the future it will be better to shield his fingers with cork or india-rubber in dealing with cases of this kind.

It is a well-known fact that people whose limbs have been amputated tell you that they can feel their fingers and toes for a long time afterwards—for years, sometimes—and will even describe pain and definite sensations as affecting certain joints of individual digits. This is readily understood when we remember that the brain is the only part of the body that *feels*, all sensations and impulses being conveyed to it from different parts by nerve-fibres. Feelings of pain, heat, cold, touch, and the functions of the special senses are telegraphed to it; and when the connecting nerve is divided, it may be some time before it learns to localise truly the seat of the sensation it appreciates. When we knock our 'funny-bones,' we experience a thrill in the little finger and inner border of the hand; the fact being that we have stimulated the bundle of telegraph wires—known as the ulnar nerve—which transmit sensations from that finger and part of the next, in the middle of its course, as it winds round the joint of the elbow.

Some years ago, a nurse in one of our Metropolitan hospitals, mistaking one bottle for another in the dim dawn of a foggy morning, gave a poor woman a teacupful of concentrated carbolic acid, instead of black draught. The unfortunate patient drank half of it, and might have taken it all before discovering the mistake, had she not paused for breath. She died in great agony in a few minutes. Medical men were of course on the spot; but nothing could be done. There is no antidote to carbolic acid; and the mouth, throat, and—as we afterwards found—the stomach were so burnt that it was impossible to use the stomach-pump; they were in fact charred white, like a stick. It appears extraordinary that any one should drink such a quantity of a fluid so intensely corrosive as this acid without finding the mistake directly it touched the lips; but medicines, never agreeable, are usually swallowed as hastily as possible, and the patient does not stop to analyse any specially unpleasant sensations, when he knows that some such are inevitable.

A curious parallel to this case was brought before me at sea, where a quartermaster went into the cabin of an officer on watch in the middle of the night, and seizing what he took to be a bottle of brandy, drank about six ounces of the contents. It was pure carbolic acid, and the man fell dead before he could summon assistance; but here, too, we may account for the large amount swallowed before the character of the liquid was recognised. He was consciously in the commission of a theft, and being, moreover, in danger of detection every moment, no doubt hurried to secure the brandy as rapidly as he could, the expected fluid being also of a burning nature to the palate and throat. In this last case, the carbolic acid, though not in its own characteristic bottle, was labelled 'Poison,' and was kept in the officer's washing-locker. The quartermaster had no doubt caught sight of the bottle there, and imagined it was stowed away for concealment. About a tablespoonful of this excellent disinfectant in the morning's bath is a great luxury in the tropics, not only allaying the

maddening irritation of existent 'prickly-heat' and insect bites, but acting as a preventive to other eruptions, and offering a discouragement to mosquitoes and other pests of these regions.

PLAYING THE WRONG CARD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

MR STYLES sat silent and stupefied, after the departure of his colleague. The pipe had gone out, and was not rekindled; while the jug of beer, which had given point to the sarcasm of Charley—as he still called him in his reverie—remained untouched at his elbow. The situation was indeed a serious one for the unlucky Professor. He had been buoyed up by the prospect of this unexpected windfall; he had seen his way to taking larger halls, and 'working' larger towns for the next week or two at anyrate, by its help; and now it had utterly vanished, plunging him, as a matter of course, as deep into despair as its prospect had raised him into hope. He had sent the baggage-man and the properties on to Bingle-don, where he was announced to open the next night; a deposit was paid on the large room at the Town Hall; bills by this time were circulated, his posters had been out for some days. And now all this trouble was lost; his outlay was forfeited. He could not open by himself. Even if a musician could be found in Bingle-don, a thing hardly likely in so sedate and prim a town—such a musician as would suit *him*—what was he to do without Lucile? Her loss was utterly fatal to the speculation; in fact, her loss would be fatal to his business altogether. His slender resources would not, could not, hold out until he had replaced her. His properties would be seized, and he should be ruined. 'My health's a-going,' he muttered, as he reached this stage of his reverie; 'and I shall have to go to the workhouse. I little thought when I took old Ben Boley half-a-crown and a pound of tea last year, that I should so soon come to be where I saw him; but it's what I am coming to.'

A tremendous knock at the street door interrupted and startled him. He listened with a foreboding of some fresh evil; but ere he could determine who was the visitor, the door of his room was thrown open, and Mr Ignatius Hythe came hurriedly and excitedly in. 'Here's a pretty go!' exclaimed that gentleman, who could scarcely gasp out the words—'here's a pretty go! Where's that confounded foreign scoundrel? He has done it! A nice thing I have made of it by employing him.'

'What has he done? I should really be glad if you would tell me,' returned Styles; 'for he has been here talking in a crazy style about being revenged, and says he is actually the person who employed him to represent.'

'So he is!' cried Hythe. 'The vagabond was just the last man in the world we ought to have spoken to. He has nearly killed my brother, and has entirely ruined me.'

'What has he done?' exclaimed Styles, who was partly excited and partly frightened, as his visitor plunged frantically about the room. 'How

has he killed your brother? How has he ruined you?

'He has given my brother a shock from which he will never recover,' said Mr Ignatius; 'he has had a fit in consequence, and in his weak state it will be fatal. But he has actually seen his daughter! This abominable foreign musician, or whatever you choose to call him, is her uncle. He showed her to Maurice. He took her away with a threat that Maurice should never see her again. What is the consequence? My brother now knows that she is alive, while previously he only dreamed it. His conscience, which was morbid and troublesome enough before, is now irresistible. He means to telegraph for his solicitor to-morrow. He will alter his will in favour of this child, so that now we shall get nothing at all! If she had remained here, it would not have mattered, as he would have been content with providing for her, and compensating by kindness for any wrong he had done; but he regards what has now happened as a judgment, and that on account of it he is bound to mortify himself and all his friends.—And by Jove, sir, it is mortifying!' concluded Mr Hythe, with an abrupt change of tone.

'Well, what are you going to do? What do you want me to do?' asked Styles. 'He has entirely broken up my tour. I have billed my two next towns, paid a deposit on the hall at Bingleton; and here am I without a chance of giving the show, and hardly enough money left for my railway fare.'

'Oh! here's some money; take it; I want your help,' exclaimed Hythe, throwing a number of sovereigns on the table.

With sparkling eyes, the Professor scrambled them up. 'Well, what help do you want from me?' he asked.

'We must find this fellow; we must get back the girl!' returned Mr Hythe. 'Confound him! He has no right to keep her from her parent. It's unnatural—it's atrocious. If I can get hold of her, I have not the least doubt, from what I know of my brother, that we can manage him very well. So we will follow this foreign scoundrel, and catch him if we can. I will claim the girl, and call in the police if necessary. Gad, if it's necessary, I will seize her by force, and you must back me up!'

'Oh!' ejaculated Styles, with a perceptible lengthening of his visage; 'I don't altogether like that idea. He's a dangerous fellow, and he carries the ugliest knife you ever saw out of a butcher's shop.'

'I don't care for his knives or any of his foreign tricks!' exclaimed the desperate Ignatius. 'I'll knock him down with my stick, if we really come to a fight. But for the matter of that, I would just as soon be run through the body as not, if we don't get the girl back.'

'Ah! but I wouldn't,' said the cautious Styles; 'and I give you fair warning that while I will do all I can in the way of persuasion, or will back you up in case we fetch the police, if it comes to fighting—keep me out!'

'I'll do that part of the business,' said his resolute visitor. 'Rather than not keep my brother from altering his will, I would face twenty foreigners with twenty knives apiece.

—Now, come on. How shall we get on his trail?'

'That won't be very difficult to begin with, at anyrate,' said Styles. 'He must have gone by rail, if he has gone at all; and a little gossiping place like this has one advantage—everybody knows everybody; and I'll defy such conspicuous characters as Charley and Lucile to take tickets without their being known and their destination remembered. We are right for the first stage, I am certain.'

'Then on with your coat, and off we go,' continued Hythe. 'If there's a train any time to-night in the direction they have taken, we follow.'

'But about Bingleton?'—began Styles.

'Let Bingleton shift for itself! The people at Bingleton can do without you, I daresay. Telegraph in the morning, or do what you like; but let us lose no time now.'

Thus urged, Mr Styles had no option but to comply. The sovereigns that had been so lavishly thrust upon him softened in a wonderful way his feelings regarding the disappointment of the good people of Bingleton.

In a few minutes they had left the house, and were at the railway station, where the correctness of Mr Styles's judgment was at once made manifest. The clerk and porter each recollected the departure of Mr Joinville, as they called him, accompanied by Mademoiselle Tuscano, and recollected also that they had taken tickets for a station named Bushfield. The night-mail, due in about an hour and a half, stopped at that station.

'He will change there, and go across to Stumpley, which is on the South-western line,' said Hythe. 'He means to go on to Southampton, and take a steamer for America; that's his game.'

'But I don't think he has enough money'—said Styles.

'Oh! there's never any telling with these foreigners,' interrupted Hythe. 'He may have been screwing and saving up ever since he has been with you.'

Mr Styles made no reply to this suggestion; but by an expressive frown and shake of the head, he might have been of opinion that 'Charley,' as he still called him, was not likely to have saved much while in *his* company.

To follow their journeyings in quest of the fugitives would only weary the reader. Suffice it, therefore, to note that Mr Hythe and Styles at length found themselves—*en route* for Southampton—at Bushfield Junction.

The junction was at a very lonely spot; a straggling village was the nearest approach to a town for several miles; while out on the bare downs beyond, or in the narrow dull lanes which served for byroads, there were but few cottages to be seen, and still fewer buildings which deserved the name of farmhouses. So there was little to invite any one to go strolling about in the quiet light of the sinking sun, which was now just visible above the low hills which bounded the view to the west. Thus argued Styles; but Hythe was of a different opinion. Luckily, however, he did not deem it necessary to insist on the Professor accompanying him in his ramble; and so, comfortably ensconced in the village inn, with the London paper to

read, his legs resting on the long seat, the oft deferred meal at last served, Styles awaited his companion's return without impatience.

Mr Hythe, restless as before, soon got beyond the limits of the village, and crossed the wide common which lies immediately beyond. He then turned to retrace his steps, as twilight had set in; and the occasional barking of dogs reminded him that it might be unpleasant to find his way back after dark. Passing one of the few houses which were of somewhat better grade than the poorest labourers' cottages, he saw a woman standing at the door, who looked so earnestly at him, that he thought she was about to speak. Slackening his pace, he looked fixedly at her in turn. The woman noticing it, said apologetically, and dropping a rustie courtesy, as she spoke: 'I thought, sir, you might be Dr Camm, or some one from him; that's what I was looking out for, sir.'

'I am sorry you are disappointed,' replied Hythe. 'I hope you have no serious cause for wishing to see a doctor.'

'Indeed, I have, sir,' said the woman; 'and I am afraid Davy—that's my boy, sir—hasn't found Dr Camm at home, he has been so long gone.'

'I have been a doctor, although now retired from the profession,' said Hythe. 'If I can be of any service till your own doctor comes'—

'You are very kind, sir,' replied the woman, as Hythe paused; 'and if you would not mind looking in, I should be a great deal easier in my mind. We have had a gentleman and little girl staying here for a day or two.'

'Eh? a gentleman and little girl!' repeated Hythe, roused into the keenest attention at once.

'Yes, sir,' she continued. 'They are foreigners, I think; and he is mortal bad to-day. I think he is going out of his mind, as well as being dreadful ill, sir; and the little girl is so frightened.'

'Where is he?' exclaimed Hythe, in a decided tone. 'I will see him at once.'

'I don't know, sir,' said the woman hesitatingly, 'whether he has got any money; and we are too poor'—

'Oh! that is of no consequence,' returned Hythe, with a readiness which at once impressed the poor woman with a sense of his generosity. 'Just show me to his room.'

The woman turned, and led the stranger into the front-room, which, meanly furnished as it was, was evidently the best parlour of the house. A low moaning sound was audible as he entered. 'That is the poor gentleman, sir,' she continued. 'He is in the back-room. I will go and see if he is sensible.—This gentleman is a doctor, my dear, and will cure your uncle.' This last phrase was addressed to a girl who sat cowering and shy in the darkest corner of the apartment.

Hythe had not seen her until he followed the direction of the woman's eyes. 'Ah! it's all right! I have her now,' was his mental ejaculation. The girl looked up at him without any recognition in her eyes.—'This is a strange place for you, my dear,' said Hythe. 'I know from the landlady that you have not been here long. Were you about to settle in this village?'

'No; I think not, sir,' replied the girl. 'I hardly know what Mr Charles was going to do; I think he meant to go back to America.'

'I was not far out in my guess, then,' thought Hythe.

The return of the woman stopped further conversation; and he accompanied her to the bedroom, where, restlessly turning on his couch, lay the man whom he had sought.

As would have been the case with every other doctor, personal feelings, likings and dislikings, all ideas of danger to himself from this man, were instantly banished, and Hythe saw in him only a suffering patient. 'His brain is dreadfully affected, and he is in great danger,' said he to the landlady presently. 'I think it is more than probable that he will die here.'

'O dear me! deary me!' exclaimed the poor soul, wringing her hands. 'Whatever shall we do? My husband has been out of work these four weeks with a bad hand.'

'I will wait until I see your local doctor,' continued Hythe; 'and will ask him to send a nurse down to assist you. As it strangely happens that I know this man, I will be responsible for all expenses, and will take the girl to her friends. There is a person waiting for me at the *Half Moon Inn* at Bushfield, to whom the little girl is well known. Can you send for him?'

'O yes, sir!' exclaimed the woman, whose face had brightened considerably. 'I do think I hear our Davy outside now. He will go.'

She was correct. Davy came in with the news that he had been waiting until Dr Camm returned; that he had seen that gentleman, who had promised to follow him in a quarter of an hour. Stimulated by the promise of a shilling, Davy lost no time in hurrying back to Bushfield as fast as his heavy, clay-clogged boots would carry him, bearing Mr Hythe's card, with a request for the immediate attendance of Styles.

The doctor arrived first, and promptly coincided with the opinion already expressed by Hythe as to the fatal nature of the illness. He readily agreed to find a nurse, and took charge of a few pounds which Hythe left in his hands for current expenses. As he did so, a little bustle was heard in the parlour, followed by an exclamation of delight and surprise from the girl. With a word of apology for his abruptness, Hythe hurried to the room, where he saw, as he expected, the girl clinging round Styles's neck in a transport of delight.

'Have you come to take me back?' said the child. 'I do not love Mr Charles as I love you.' (She had been taught to speak of him always as 'Mr Charles' in the company.) 'He does not love me at all. Do not send me away again!'

'No, Lucile, never; you shall never leave me again,' said Styles; 'that is,' he added, as he recollected the claims of Mr Maurice Hythe, 'you shall never go anywhere but where you please, and where you are happy.—She always took to me, you know,' he continued in a low tone to Mr Hythe. 'We have been together these two years, and I always considered her as my daughter.'

The girl would not part from Styles; and so, holding his hand, she presently set out to walk to the junction, Hythe following closely, after a final consultation with the surgeon, who

promised to let him know, by telegraph, the patient's state in the morning—if he lasted till then; but unless some unlooked-for change took place, he probably would not hold out.

Catching an early train, the three reached Fieldenham by midnight, where, under pretence of not disturbing their landlady, and after repeated promises from Styles to call for her the next day, the girl consented to go to Myrtle Villa to sleep, and there met with a warm reception, Mrs Hythe being quite as much alive to the importance of her restoration as was her husband.

In the morning, Styles came round punctually; and as he came to the gate, there arrived also a telegraph messenger, whose tidings were brief, but final—Villada was dead. There was an unavoidable shock in hearing this; but both Hythe and Styles were secretly conscious of a feeling of relief. Lucile—we shall for the brief remainder of our story preserve her old name—who had had no idea of his danger, was not told of his death for some days.

Early in the forenoon, as may be supposed, Mr Hythe took the girl round to his brother, who was now so weak that he could not stand, and was lying on a couch which faced the window; but the interview which followed shall be outlined in the description given of it by Mr Ignatius to his wife.

'It was like a resurrection, Maria! If you had seen a ghost, you would not have been more frightened than at seeing that panting, hollow-eyed fellow rise up with a sort of scream.—But she wasn't frightened; not a bit. How she knew he did not mean her any harm, I can't say, but she took to him directly. He says he shall get well now; and I believe he will.—I had a long talk with him, and it will be all right, Maria.'

It was all right, from the Myrtle Villa point of view. Delighted at the restoration of his daughter; thankful for the opportunity of undoing his wrong in part, at least, Maurice Hythe became a new man; and never forgetful that it was to his brother's energy and wonderful sagacity he owed these boons, his lawyer was again summoned; and the will was this time altered in a manner which gave general satisfaction.

A very handsome present to the poor woman at Bushfield Common raised her to the seventh heaven of delight, as it did also her husband who had the bad hand, and 'Davy' the messenger; while Mr Styles—But he also shall speak for himself. He often did speak of himself as he sat over his glass of grog in the select parlour of the *Three Blind Mice* at Kentish Town, N.W., which hostel stands at the corner of the street in which were situated Mr Styles's apartments. 'And that's how it was, sir,' he would say, when finishing his oft-repeated narrative. 'The tour which I thought was going to be a complete bust-up for me, was the making of me. The loss of my dancer and my pianist, which made me think of the workhouse, was the only thing, as it turned out, which could have kept me from it. I never went a tour again, and never shall now, and I don't want to. She don't forget the old man, sir; and if I ain't rich, I ain't poor, and I can jog on quiet and comfortable, as long as I've got the breath

to do it. This is the only time, sir, I ever knew a game won by playing the wrong eard, which was what we certainly did when we put Charley on the business.'

BOOK GOSSIP.

THE study of history seems to be increasing both in attractiveness and popularity. This may be due as much to the brilliant literary talent which has been brought to its service, as to its own inherent interest and value as a subject of study and means of culture. There were great names associated with the literature of history in the last century—Gibbon and Lord Hailes, Hume and Robertson; but of these, the first two have alone maintained their places as historical authorities; Hume and Robertson being now read more perhaps for their manner than their matter—for their lucid and original style, rather than for the accuracy of their historical presentations. If we have not many greater writers in the present century, we have at least better historians. Moreover, the methods of historical investigation have improved so much within the last fifty years, that history may almost be said to be an invention of the nineteenth century. To more accurate and scientific methods, also, have been added many attractions in regard to the style and treatment of historical narrative. It is not now confined simply to the relation of state intrigues and great military conflicts; it is recognised more and more as a means by which the life of a *people*, rather than the history of a kingdom, is to be traced to its sources. The story of the political struggles and social throes which gave birth to the most precious of our constitutional and civil rights, is of more interest, because fraught with more instruction, than the record of armed conquest and battles and bloodshed. The simple narrative of the Ship-money episode in the reign of Charles the First, is more illustrative of a people's progress, and hence of greater value to the historical student, than the history of all the battles that were fought and won in the campaigns of Marlborough.

Nor is it alone to the more mature minds and the more advanced readers that modern historians appeal. We have short histories by men like Green and Freeman, in which all that is essential to an intelligent appreciation of the historical problems presented, is laid before readers in language which the youngest need not fail to understand. Other writers have followed the example of these greater names; and among works of this kind we have pleasure in noticing the volume entitled *Charlemagne*, by the Rev. Edward L. Cutts, B.A. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). This is really a history of the Franks from their first inroad into the Roman Empire in the reign of Gordian, down to the death of the great Teutonic emperor whose name gives title to the book—a period of about four hundred and fifty years. The life of Charlemagne embraces the period between 742 and 814 A.D.; but some knowledge of the early settlement and inroads of the Frankish barbarians is necessary to an intelligent understanding of the reign which forms the central subject of the book. This the author gives with commendable brevity,

and at the same time with clearness and spirit. The style is familiar without being flippant; and the author draws for his materials upon the more picturesque among ancient and modern authorities. The story of Charles the Great, as thus told, will not fail to be useful to many who have not the leisure or means for studying more elaborate works. A knowledge of what this great Emperor did, and what he aimed to do, is essential to a clear understanding of European history in mediæval and modern times, and may be said to lie at the very root of it. This volume by Mr Cutts will render the subject accessible to any who have the desire to acquaint themselves, briefly, clearly, and comprehensively, with the leading characteristics of the person and history of this great mediæval monarch.

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A vivid idea of some of the treasures of the Boolak collection of Egyptian antiquities at Cairo, may be gleaned from a book recently published from the pen of Mr Villiers Stuart of Dromana, M.P. *The Funeral Tent of an Egyptian Queen* (London: John Murray) is the title of this work; the greater portion of the book consisting of a description of the remarkable tent or canopy which—as we have noted in our article on Recent Egyptian Discoveries—belonged to one of the royal mummies recently brought to light at Deir-al-Bahari. A representation of this wonderful work of art, composed of hundreds of pieces of leather carefully dovetailed together, is printed in colours; and we learn that the tints of the original work, here reproduced, are almost as fresh as they were when first the pigments were coaxed into such quaint characters nearly three thousand years ago. There are many other features of this book which will cause it to be valued as an addition to our knowledge of the treasures of ancient Egypt.

The beetle, as is well known, figures prominently on all Egyptian monuments, and is represented in the above canopy as flying with a ball upon his head. Mr Villiers Stuart gives a plate representing in various attitudes a beetle of this description which was caught by himself, and he accompanies it with an interesting description. The male is furnished with horns, these horns enabling him to perform a duty which is peculiarly his, namely, to carry balls of wet Nile-mud balanced on his head, for his mate at home to deposit her eggs in. The female is without these horns, and therefore cannot carry the pellet necessary for the security of the egg. The Egyptians, says Mr Stuart, having seen the beetles industriously rolling the globe of clay, like their emblem of the sun, and seeing them also during flight decorated with the horned disc, their emblem of divinity, came to the conclusion that they were worshipping the sun, and held them in corresponding veneration. Again, the egg deposited in the mud-pellet, after passing through the usual transformations, broke forth into life as a perfected scarabeus, and gave the Egyptians the emblem of life out of death. Hence its frequent appearance on the tombs and funeral vestments of ancient Egypt.

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In the City of London—that is, the City proper, as distinguished from the Metropolis in general—there is a large population which appear within

its bounds during the day, but disappear at night. They have offices in the City, but they do not sleep in the City. Consequently, when the census of London was taken in April last year, it was felt that, as being a *night* census, it failed to represent the true condition of that portion of London known as the City, and steps were adopted to have the defect rectified by the taking of a *day* census. The sum of twelve hundred pounds was voted for this purpose by the City Corporation, and the census was taken between the 25th and 31st of May following the Imperial census. The results of this special counting of the people have been published under the title of a *Report on the City Day-Census, 1881* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co.). Under the Imperial census, the number of people found to be in the City of London during the *night* was 50,526; but this number under the *day* census is found to be 261,061. That is, there are more than five times as many people within the City of London during the day as there are sleeping therein during the night. And not only may the City be said to be thus depopulated during the night, but this tendency of things is constantly on the increase. In 1871, the night census showed a population of nearly 75,000, as against the 50,000 of 1881, being a decrease of fifty per cent. within the ten years. No wonder, therefore, that the old City churches, notwithstanding their many sacred and historic associations, are nearly empty on Sundays; seeing that the suburbs and surrounding towns connected with the Metropolis by rail and omnibus, draw more than two hundred thousand persons out of the City every working day at the close of business hours. The book affords many points of curious study to those who are fond of statistical information.

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To the number of popular books on science, in which the scientific spirit is not sacrificed to the mere demand for an hour's amusement or relaxation, we must add *Talks About Science*, by the late Professor Thomas Dunman (London: Griffith and Farran). Mr Dunman was one of the men who had to toil upwards more by his own energy and application than by the assistance of others; and like many more who have thus had the bloom of life rubbed off in the friction of their early years, his health was undermined, and he died young, leaving the world just at the moment when he was best equipped to serve it. This little volume has been prepared rather as a slight memento of his method of teaching, by which he was endeared to a wide circle of students, than as containing any original contributions to the general knowledge of the subjects of which it treats. These subjects are such as the mechanism of sensation, prehistoric man, volcanoes and coral reefs, ice and the ice-age, how the earth is weighed and measured, with papers on the stars, on atoms and molecules, and on the lobster and common frog. His lectures, of which the papers here printed are examples, were, says his biographer, enlivened by allusions to poetry and romance, and full of living interest; while here and there were flashes of quiet humour which won his audiences, and afforded abundant explanation of his popularity with his students. This applies to the papers in the book before us, which are

at once clear and precise as regards the information that is to be conveyed, and interesting and attractive in respect of the style in which that conveyance is effected. We have no doubt the book will prove eminently useful in arousing in the mind of readers a renewed interest in questions of popular science.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A FEW artists, bearing well-known names, wrote a joint-letter to the *Times*, praying that, if possible, precautions may be taken to save picturesque Cairo from the fate of Alexandria. A somewhat similar cry was heard from archaeologists, owing to the rumour that the well-known Boubak Museum—which in their eyes is the most valuable, if not the most picturesque adornment of Cairo—was to be sold to replenish the coffers of Arabi Pacha. This Museum owes its existence to the French antiquary Mariette Bey; and, as our readers are aware, it contains the principal part of those treasures and curiosities which the Egyptian tombs have from time to time revealed. In one way, the dispersion of these memorials of ancient Egypt—provided they found their way to the safe custody of European Museums—need not be regretted, for the building which at present holds them is said, from the undermining of the Nile, to be in a rather dilapidated state. But the mere suggestion that such a man as Arabi has cast a wistful glance upon them, raises fears that some of his fanatical followers may from utter wantonness destroy relics of their country's past which can never be replaced. It is to be hoped, however, that such a catastrophe may be averted.

Although civilised nations have left the records of their former greatness in their tombs and other monuments, those whose lives were spent in a savage state, and who had no such heritage to leave behind them, have not passed away into silence without leaving very distinct traces of their whereabouts. The 'kitchen-middens,' or vast heaps of shells which are now found on so many coasts, together with the bone and flint implements buried in them, tell us of the food and mode of life of these very early dwellers on the earth. Many attempts have been made to calculate the time which must have elapsed before these heaps of refuse could have attained the dimensions which they now exhibit; though a writer in a recent number of the *American Naturalist* endeavours to show in a very interesting manner that these calculations are likely to exaggerate the time necessary for such accumulation. His observations are directed to the Innuits tribes on the Alaska coast, who, in common with other savage people in various parts of the world, are at the present day contributing to its surface these remains of their daily meals. He tells us how he has watched a healthy Innuit family despatching their meals of echinus or sea-urchin—how their teeth crack the spiny shell, and how the luscious contents are licked out before the debris falls in a continuous shower to the ground. He says: 'The heaps of refuse created under such circumstances during a single season were truly astonishing in size. They

will surely mislead the ingenious calculator of the antiquity of shell-heaps a thousand years hence.'

The recent bombardment of Alexandria naturally gives a zest for naval and military information, and the following note, communicated to a contemporary by the Superintendent of the Royal Laboratory at Woolwich, giving as it does the particulars of the cost of each charge fired from one of the *Inflexible's* eighty-one ton guns, will be of interest:

Cartridge filled, 425 lb. P ₂ powder.....	£10	2	0
Bag, bursting, filled.....	0	12	0
Shell, Palliser, 16-inch.....	11	16	5
Gas-check for do.....	2	17	9
Tube, electric.....	0	0	4

Total cost of one round.....£25 9 0

That is, in round figures, £100 for every four shots fired from the *Inflexible*.

It is reported that the Council of the Royal Geographical Society contemplate the equipment of another expedition to the 'Dark Continent,' in order to explore the mountains Kenia and Kilimanjaro, and the country which separates them from the eastern shores of Victoria Nyanza. This expedition is to be under the command of Mr Joseph Thomson, and will start on its mission early next year.

The Royal Agricultural Society have been very unfortunate of late years, owing to the persistent rain which has driven sightseers from their annual shows. The present rainy year has proved no exception to the rule; but as a set-off, the wet weather has called attention to two new modes of hay-making which would perhaps have been forgotten, or lost sight of, if the sun had been more generous with its beams. One plan which has already been in vogue for some years is that of Mr Gibbs, who by passing wet grass through a hot-air machine, is able at once to convert it into valuable hay. At the late Agricultural Show at Reading, six acres of grass, estimated to yield twelve tons of finished hay, were converted into dry hay in six hours; whilst, had it been allowed to lie on the ground, and left to the tender mercies of such weather as we have since had, it must have rotted and spoiled. The other process of saving wet grass is that of Mr J. Coultas. Mr Coultas does not use hot air, but directs all his attention to the construction of the haystack and to means for keeping it cool. His method of procedure is briefly as follows: In building the stack, an aperture, or rather inner chamber, is formed, by placing in the midst of the material a stuffed sack, which is withdrawn before the stack is complete. From the lower part of this chamber there is carried an air-shaft or pipe to an exhaust fan outside the sack. Apertures are also made in the stack for the insertion of thermometers. When the heat from the wet mass rises above a certain limit, the fan is set in motion; and while it extracts the saturated air from the stack, the outer atmosphere is dragged into it from every pore. In this way the temperature is rapidly reduced and the grass quickly dried into sweet hay.

The unseasonable weather has perhaps had something to do with the invention of a very clever little contrivance for recording the duration of rainfall. Most of our readers must be familiar with the form of the ordinary rain-gauge or

pluviometer, which may be roughly described as a funnel leading to a graduated glass vessel, by which the amount of liquid collected can be easily read off in hundredths of an inch. This rough-and-ready apparatus, although it has been improved upon so as to prevent loss by evaporation, &c., leaves much to be desired. It would take no note, for instance, of very light showers, which would therefore pass unrecorded. The new rainfall recorder, the invention of M. Schmeltz, appears to meet this want, for it will register the falling of a single drop, provided that drop falls upon its sensitive surface. It consists of a box containing a slip of chemically prepared paper, which moves by clockwork from one reel to another, a certain length of the paper passing, as in the Morse and other printing telegraphic machines, within a given time. The paper in question is first treated with a solution of sulphate of iron, and after being thoroughly dried, is brushed with tannic acid. A drop of water on such a surface is sufficient to bring the two chemicals into nearer relationship, and a dark mark is the result. (Our chemical readers will see that the two agents named are the constituents of common writing-ink.) It stands to reason that if the paper be graduated into hours and minutes, the exact time and duration of the rainfall will be recorded. It will be noticed that this rainfall recorder does not afford any means of judging of the amount of water received by the soil, and perhaps for this reason it will serve as an aid to the ordinary rain-gauge, rather than a contrivance destined to supersede that instrument.

Whilst the English farmer has had much cause to anticipate the prospect of another bad season, the Americans have had as much reason to rejoice at the splendid weather with which they have been favoured. But the transatlantic farmer has enemies to guard against such as his English rival knows nothing of. Thus, in the *San Francisco Call* newspaper, we find a curious account of the means which are found necessary to protect the wheat-crops from the invasion of wild-geese, in a certain farm of seventy-five thousand acres in Colusa County, California. Forty men armed with rifles patrol this farm not only in the daytime but on every moonlight night. Flocks of geese—which, we are told, look from a distance like huge white blankets—settle down upon the wheat-fields, and make havoc of the crops, unless the riflemen are on the alert, and knock over a few of them by way of example. Sometimes a thick fog will come on, and then is the time that the geese will feed with impunity, for the men are afraid to use their weapons in case of mutual injury.

The electric light has found a novel employment in the hands of some ingenious Frenchmen, who have lately, by permission of their government, been experimenting with it as a lure for fish. The lamp was contained in an air-tight globe, and was lowered at night into the sea, with the result that thousands of fish of all sizes were attracted to its brilliant light. Boats furnished with nets gradually closed in upon the living mass and made a great haul of fish. We hardly know whether this mode of enticing the finny tribes will be considered quite legitimate by the angling and fishing fraternities.

At the recent distribution of prizes and awards in connection with the late Smoke Abatement Exhibition at South Kensington, it was stated that the Committee have determined that their labours shall not yet cease if they can obtain the support of the public to carry them on. They hope to be able to form a permanent Institute, which would have for its chief objects the promotion of schemes for the better utilisation of coal and coal products, the improvement of means for heating houses as at present constructed without producing smoke, and to deal with those subjects generally for the public information and benefit. Such a scheme should most certainly meet with cordial support from the dwellers in our large cities, where the increase of smoky chimneys is doing such damage to health and property.

In an article 'Simple Facts concerning Water,' we recently pointed out how hard water can be made soft by the addition of lime, and the theory of the chemical changes which occur. This method has long been known as Clark's process, and although thoroughly effectual, it has the disadvantage of requiring the water to be stored in precipitating tanks for about twenty-four hours before it is ready for use. A modification of this system, by which the water can be softened without being left to settle, has been introduced by the Atkins Water-softening and Purifying Company of 62 Fleet Street, London. In this system, a jet of lime-water is introduced into the liquid to be treated, which is then conveyed to a mixing-chamber, and afterwards to some rotary disc filters, where the precipitated lime is quickly collected on cloth-covered discs. The water, thoroughly softened, then flows onward for immediate use, or can be stored in reservoirs until required. This new method of dealing with hard waters has already been tried with success for some private water-supplies, and has now been adopted by the Henley-on-Thames Water-works. The Brighton Railway Company are also erecting the necessary plant for supplying their engines with softened water.

The invention and quickly increasing employment for various purposes of explosives such as nitro-glycerine, dynamite, and others of the same family, compared with which gunpowder is but a feeble agent, call for constant attention on the part of our legislature. It has been recently pointed out by the government inspectors that the railway Companies, in refusing as they do to carry such dangerous goods on any terms whatever, exhibit a short-sighted policy. Such things are easily concealed as ordinary luggage; and the railway Companies must know that in their trains, parcels containing them must often be surreptitiously conveyed. It would be far better to carry them—as acids and other dangerous commodities are now carried—by specially appointed trains, and with proper appliances to protect them from accidental ignition. It is a fortunate circumstance that most of these new explosives need percussion fuses to rouse them into full destructive fury, many of them burning harmlessly away if a simple flame be applied to them. It will thus be seen that dynamite is not such a treacherous fellow-traveller as might be supposed; still, we should be glad to see it relegated to a train of its own.

The recent exhibition at the Alexandra Palace of 'Means and Appliances for the Protection and Preservation of Human Life,' contained many inventions of a very interesting and valuable nature. It included a full-sized pair of facing-points fitted on a railway, showing the extension of the inter-locking system to all the various moving parts of the railway system; contrivances for preventing boiler-explosions; safety-lamps for use in mines, detectors of fire-damp, boat-lowering gear, and many other life-saving appliances. In the section devoted to life-belts and means for keeping the body afloat in the water, we noticed two exhibits which appeared to have the merit of novelty as well as efficiency. The first was the employment of powdered burnt cork for stuffing life-belts, ships' mattresses, cushions, &c.—giving greater buoyancy than the usual unburnt material. The other exhibit to which we refer consisted of life-saving garments. Most dresses of this kind are of a cumbrous and unsightly description, such garments, in fact, as no one would from choice carry about with him. But here we saw greatcoats, ladies' dresses, cut in the latest fashion too, so skilfully furnished in the linings with little cylinders of cork, that their presence was quite undetected until pointed out. People in the habit of yachting, or who are engaged in any occupation which brings them into daily chance of falling into the water, would do well to make further inquiries relative to this useful adaptation of the life-belt principle. The manufacturers are Messrs Wentworth & Co., of 12 Museum Street, London, W.C.

A few weeks ago, Mr Benjamin Askew delivered a lecture to the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, on the use of powdered stucco in the welding of cast steel; and in a day or two afterwards a Committee of the Society had an opportunity of witnessing at St Margaret's Works, Edinburgh, the welding of steel by the process described. The welding is done by means of powdered stucco used just as smiths are accustomed to use sand in other weldings. Four pieces of cast steel from two different makers were welded into one square bar, which was afterwards broken. The fracture showed no mark of the joining, but the grain of the two qualities of steel could be distinguished. Two old files were welded together and hammered into the shape of a chisel, which was then hardened, tempered, and sharpened, and used to cut an inch-bar of iron. The process is so simple that any skilled smith may practise it; he must use heat enough to flux, or melt, the stucco, but not so much as to fuse the steel.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SUGGESTED CURE FOR THE POTATO DISEASE.

ALL the way from Copenhagen comes a cure for the potato-disease. The cure is simple, inexpensive, and its author—Mr J. L. Jensen—says it is effective. The potato-disease, as most of our readers are aware, is caused by a fungoid growth which destroys the structure of the plant. The generally received theory is that the spores germinate—in wet weather—on the leaves of the plants, and that the fungus then spreads through

the plant's system, reaching and spoiling the tubers. Mr Jensen's theory is that it does not reach the tubers in that manner, but by the spores being washed by rain off the leaves into the soil; where, coming in contact with the tubers, disease is induced. Mr Jensen's cure is to earth up the potatoes high enough to afford protection. His method is to remove as much soil from one side of the row as will allow of the stems being bent over at an angle of forty-five degrees, and then to heap up the soil with the hoe—or with a plough of his own invention—to a depth of four inches over the tubers. This is made steep enough to shed the rain which washes the spores, not among the potatoes, but into the ditch thus formed. As Mr Jensen claims to have secured potatoes with no more than from one to three per cent. of diseased tubers, when others not so treated were smitten to the extent of thirty per cent., the plan is well worth a trial.

A writer in the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, hailing from Devonshire, claims to have practised the above method for a number of years with decided success. He learned it from an old labourer, who had always saved his crop by such means, when his neighbours had lost theirs.

ROD AND LINE FISHING IN NORTH UIST.

With reference to the article on the above subject which appeared in last month's *Journal*, we are requested by the proprietor to state that all the lochs, &c. on the island are preserved, more especially as regards 'salmon, sea-trout, and salmon-kind;' some of which, such as *Salmo salar* (salmon) and *Salmo trutta* (bull-trout), are, we are assured, occasionally taken.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

WHAT memories come, O Heart,
To thee in the Autumn chill,
When the leaves that have done their part
Are tossed at the cold wind's will?
When the sun that beamed so bright
Gleeth down ere the day is past,
What shades dost thou see in the fading light?
What sighs dost thou hear in the blast?

Bright hopes have died like the leaves,
But, unlike them, no more shall bloom;
And the voice of the wind is like one who grieves
Alone, in a world of gloom!
The shadows I see are those
Who have passed from my side away,
And I hear them speak at the short day's close,
When the light is dull and gray.

And oft in the midnight lone,
When the world is wrapped in rest,
The fond hopes I once called my own
Rise living within my breast.
But soon, with a throbbing pain,
I think of the leaves that fall,
And liken their forms to the hopes so vain
Which no Spring can recall.

J. H.

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A PEEP INTO AN ANTS' NEST.

THE name of Sir John Lubbock has long been connected with the subject of ants and bees, and he has obtained a foremost place among the investigators into this department of insect life. Yet his scientific work, laborious and exhaustive as it is, does not interfere with his performance of the duties which devolve upon him in his professional and political capacities as a banker and member of parliament. Amid all the demands which these duties make upon his time and energies, and which themselves might be deemed sufficient employment for any one man, he yet finds time to pursue his favourite studies in natural history; and the books and papers which he has issued thereon are not more remarkable for their revelations of insect and plant life, than for the evidence they give of most laborious and painstaking research on the part of the writer. Sir John Lubbock has recently issued a new volume, the result of ten years' experiment and observation, entitled, *Ants, Bees, and Wasps* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co.), some of the interesting and startling facts of which, so far as they relate to ants, we propose to bring before our readers.

Ants have long afforded amusement and wonder to observers, on account of what might be called their near approach to human intelligence, as exhibited in their social organisation, their large communities, their elaborate habitations, their education of their young, their military tactics, their construction of roadways and bridges, and their possession of domestic animals, and even, in some cases, of slaves. In this country we have more than thirty kinds of ants; but they become much more numerous in species, as well as individuals, in warmer countries, more than a thousand different species being known to exist. The author tells us that he has kept in captivity about half of our British species of ants, as well as a considerable number of foreign forms, and for the last few years he has generally had from thirty to forty communities under observation. After

trying various plans, he found the best way to keep the ants was in nests consisting of two panes of common window-glass, about ten inches square, laid flat one above the other, but kept apart to a distance of a quarter of an inch or less by thin slips of wood round the edges, the space between the panes being filled up with fine earth, in which the ants devise such compartments as they require. The object of restricting the space between the panes of glass to a quarter of an inch or so, is that the ants may not be able to hide themselves from observation, which they would be likely to do were there a greater depth of earth. Moreover, there being glass below as well as above, the movements of the ants can at all times be well observed. These nests are placed on a stand, one above the other at intervals apart, but arranged so that each nest can be detached for purposes of special observation. Various means also, such as surrounding their nests with water, are taken to prevent the ants from escaping, or passing from one nest to another. These nests afford special facilities for observing the internal economy of ant-life; and especially for watching and recording the actions of individual ants. For this purpose, the particular insect to be watched requires to be marked, and the most convenient mode of marking them was, he found, either with a small dab of paint on the back, or, in the case of bees or wasps, by snipping off a minute fragment at the extremity of the wing. This, from the structure of the wing, gives the insect no pain, nor does it interfere with its flight.

No two species of ants, says Lubbock, are identical in habits; and, on various accounts, their mode of life is far from easy to unravel. In the first place, most of their time is passed underground; all the education of the young, for instance, is carried on in the dark. The life of the ant falls into the four well-marked periods usual with insects—those of the egg, of the larva or grub, of the pupa or chrysalis, and of the perfect insect or imago. The eggs are white or yellowish, and are said to hatch in fifteen days;

but those observed by Lubbock have taken a month or six weeks. The larvae are small, white, legless grubs, which that section of the ant-communities called workers carefully tend and feed, carrying them about from chamber to chamber, probably in order to secure for these baby ants the most suitable amount of warmth and moisture. The larvae, also, are very often assorted according to age. The author remarks that it is sometimes very curious to see them arranged in groups according to size, so that they remind one of a school divided into five or six classes. When they enter the chrysalis state, some of the larvae are covered with silken cocoons, others remain naked. The reason of this distinction is not yet understood; but the curious fact is noted, that as a general rule, the species which have not a sting, spin a cocoon, while those which have a sting are naked. After remaining some days in the chrysalis state, they emerge as perfect insects. In many cases, however, they would perish in the attempt, if they were not assisted; and it is very pretty, says Sir John Lubbock, to see the older ants helping them to extricate themselves, carefully unfolding their legs and smoothing out the wings, with truly feminine tenderness and delicacy.

Under ordinary circumstances, an ants' nest, like a beehive, consists of three kinds of individuals, namely, workers or imperfect females (which constitute the great majority), males, and perfect females. There are, however, often several queens in an ants' nest—these queens being provided with wings; but after a single flight they tear them off, and do not again quit the nest. Very young ants devote themselves at first to the care of the larvae and pupæ, and take no share in the defence of the nest or other out-of-door work until they are some days old. This seems so arranged because at first their skin is comparatively soft, and it would be undesirable for them to undertake rough work or run into danger until their armour had had time to harden. When they are sufficiently strong, they join the workers, and their education may then be said to have begun. The division of labour among the ants is still further developed. Among the slave-keeping species, the mistresses, for instance, never go out themselves for food, leaving all this to the slaves. Others, again, send out foraging expeditions, certain ants being told off for this purpose; and if any member of the expedition is taken prisoner or otherwise prevented from returning to the nest, it is observed that another ant is sent to replace it.

The food of ants consists of insects, great numbers of which they destroy; of honey, honey-dew, and fruit; indeed, scarcely any animal or sweet substance seems to come amiss to them. They are, however, particularly fond of honey, and one species of ants, from Mexico, take a very curious way of storing it up for use. This is by selecting certain individuals among them to act as receptacles of food—serving indeed as animated honey-pots! To them the foragers bring their supplies, and their whole duty seems to be to receive the honey, retain it, and redistribute it when required. These living honey-jars are packed till the abdomen of the creature is distended to many times its own bulk; consequently, as might be

expected, the ants so used as receptacles of food are very inactive. It is not known that any English species practise this extraordinary method of storing food.

Ants have, further, a human-like inclination for keeping domestic animals. Some species, such as the small brown garden ant, keep tiny aphides (a kind of green plant-lice) as milk-cows. They go out and ascend bushes in search of them. When the ant finds one, she strokes and caresses the aphid gently with her antennæ, and the aphid emits a drop of sweet fluid, which the ant imbibes. Sometimes the ants even build covered-ways—a kind of cow-sheds of earth—for the aphides, which moreover they protect from the attacks of other insects. But this is not all. The yellow ants collect the root-feeding species of aphides in their nests, and tend them as carefully as their own young. And they not only guard the mature aphides, which are useful, but also the eggs of the aphides, which of course, until they come to maturity, are quite useless. Nor is the aphid the only domestic animal kept by the ants. Another class of ant-guests are those which reside actually in the galleries and chambers of, and with, the ants, but which the latter never harm. Of these, the commonest in England is a species allied to the Podura—a kind of wingless insects, known, from their leaping powers, by the name of skip-jack or spring-tail. The member of this species which the ant favours is an active bustling little thing, which runs about among the ants, keeping its antennæ in a state of constant vibration. Another guest of the ants is a sort of white woodlouse. Both of these last-mentioned favourites are blind, probably, says Lubbock, from living so constantly in the dark. 'It is certain,' he adds, 'that the ants intentionally (if I may so say) sanction the residence of these insects in their nests. An unauthorised interloper would be at once killed. I have, therefore, ventured to suggest that these insects may perhaps act as scavengers.'

With the exception of the aphides, the guests just mentioned have no particular attention paid them by the ants. But this is not the case with still another favourite, which, by the way, is also blind. This is the curious little beetle called *Claviger*—from its club-shaped antennæ—which is quite blind, and appears to be absolutely dependent upon the ants. 'It even seems to have lost the power of feeding itself; at any rate, it is habitually fed by the ants, who supply it with nourishment as they do one another.' The ants are evidently careful to keep these tiny beetles clean, as they are seen frequently to lick the whole upper surface of the body. On one occasion, an observer saw a beetle fed by an ant. Several ants were sucking a morsel of sugar, when the beetle approached one of them, and tapped her several times on the head with its antennæ. The ant then opened her mandibles, and fed the beetle as she would have done one of her own species. The beetle crept upon the sugar, but did not appear able to feed itself. The author thinks it not altogether impossible that some of these same insects may be kept by ants merely as pets.

Among ants, as a rule, each species lives by itself. There are, however, interesting exceptions, some small species being found exclusively

in the nests of certain larger species. It is not known, however, what the relation between these species is. In one case, when the large ants change their nest, the smaller species are seen to follow them, 'running about among them and between their legs, tapping them inquisitively with their antennæ, and even sometimes climbing on to their backs, as if for a ride, while the large ants seem to take little notice of them. They almost seem to be the dogs, or perhaps the cats, of the ants. Another small species, which makes its chambers and galleries in the walls of the nests of larger species, is the bitter enemy of its hosts. The latter cannot get at them, because they are too large to enter the galleries. The little species, therefore, are quite safe; and, as it appears, they make incursions into the nurseries of the larger ant, and carry off the larvæ as food. It is as if we had small dwarfs, about eighteen inches to two feet long, harbouring in the walls of our houses, and every now and then carrying off some of our children into their horrid dens.'

There is another striking feature in the social organisation of ants which we must notice; that is, their habit of keeping slaves. Most ants will carry off the larvæ and pupæ of other species if they get a chance; and this throws light upon that most remarkable phenomenon, the existence of slavery among them. 'If you place a number of larvæ and pupæ in front of a nest of the Horse ant, for instance, they are soon carried off; and those which are not immediately required for food remain alive for some time, and are even fed by their captors.' This is not, however, a confirmed habit with the Horse ant; but there is an allied species, which exists in some of our southern counties and throughout Europe, with which it has become an established practice. These ants make periodical expeditions, attack neighbouring nests, and carry off the pupæ. When the pupæ come to maturity, they find themselves among others of their own species, the results of previous predatory expeditions. They adapt themselves to circumstances, assist in the ordinary household duties, and, having no young of their own species, feed and tend those of their mistresses.

This species of slave-holding ants, while aided in their duties by their slaves, do not themselves lose the instinct of working. But there is another species of slave-holders, the Amazon ant, which do, and which have become almost entirely dependent upon their slaves. They indeed present a striking picture of the degrading tendencies of slavery. 'Even their bodily structure has undergone a change; the mandibles have lost their teeth, and have become mere nippers—deadly weapons indeed, but useless except in war. They have lost the greater part of their instincts: their art, that is, the power of building; their domestic habits, for they show no care for their own young, all this being done by the slaves; their industry—they take no part in providing the daily supplies; if the colony changes the situation of its nest, the masters are all carried by their slaves on their backs to the new one; nay, they have even lost the habit of feeding. Huber placed thirty of them with some larvæ and pupæ, and a supply of honey, in a box. "At first," he says, "they appeared to pay some little attention to the larvæ; they

carried them here and there, but presently replaced them. More than one-half of the Amazons died of hunger in less than two days. They had not even traced out a dwelling, and the few ants still in existence were languid and without strength. I commiserated their condition, and gave them one of their black companions. This individual, unassisted, established order, formed a chamber in the earth, gathered together the larvæ, extricated several young ants that were ready to quit the condition of pupæ, and preserved the life of the remaining Amazons." This observation,' adds Lubbock, 'has been fully confirmed by other naturalists. However small the prison, however large the quantity of food, these stupid creatures will starve in the midst of plenty rather than feed themselves.'

We must now say something about the military tactics of these wonderful little creatures. Different species have their several peculiar modes of fighting. One species, for instance, never attacks, and scarcely ever defends themselves. Their skin being very hard, they roll themselves into a ball. Another species has the habit, like Reynard, of feigning death as a means of self-protection. But there are other species who are regular Zulus. Amongst these is the Horse ant, before mentioned. This ant, when it goes to war, attacks in serried masses, seldom sending out detachments, while single ants scarcely ever make individual attacks. They rarely pursue a flying foe, but give no quarter, killing as many enemies as possible, and never hesitating, with this object, to sacrifice themselves for the common good. Another species have a similar mode of attack, and when in close quarters they bite right and left, dancing about to avoid being bitten themselves. When fighting with larger species, three or four of them seize upon an enemy at once, and then pull different ways, so that their big antagonist cannot get at any one of her foes. One of them then jumps on her back, and cuts, or rather saws, off her head. The Amazon ants, whose dependence for food and comfort upon their slaves has been already described, are, however degraded in a civil sense, terrible gladiators when there is fighting to be done. Their jaws are very powerful and pointed; and if an individual of this order is attacked, she at once takes her enemy's head into her jaws, closes her mandibles, so that the points pierce the brain of her enemy, paralysing the nervous system, the victim falling dead in convulsions. In this manner, a comparatively small force of these Amazons will fearlessly attack much larger armies of other species, and themselves suffer scarcely any loss.

We cannot conclude without some allusion to the more strictly social—we had almost said moral—behaviour of ants. As regards their treatment of their distressed neighbours and friends, Sir John Lubbock, after numerous interesting and amusing experiments, is unable to give the little creatures a very good character. Hatred is much stronger than affection among them. He has indeed often been surprised that in certain cases ants render one another so little assistance. If an ant is fighting with one of another species, her friends rarely come to her assistance, passing by, and not even stopping to look on. In the case of ants in a half-drowned

condition, which the author placed in the way of their friends going between the nest and their feeding-ground, individual ants would pass their insensible neighbour eighteen and twenty times, and never once pay the slightest attention to her. Our author thinks there is evidence that ants are less tender to friends in distress than previous observers have stated to be the case; though at the same time he finds such individual differences existing as to warrant him in concluding that there are good Samaritans, as well as Priests and Levites, among them, as among men.

The general carelessness or heartlessness of ants to each other when in distress does not arise from their inability to recognise each other. Although a community of ants will sometimes number as many as fifty thousand individuals, yet the ants of the community all recognise one another. Even when ants are removed from a nest in the condition of pupæ, but tended by friends, if reintroduced into the parent nest, they are recognised and treated as friends. Pupæ taken away in the same manner, and brought up by ants of another species, are, when returned to the parent nest, equally well recognised by the general body of their friends, though occasionally some relatives are puzzled. *How* this recognition between ants is effected, cannot definitely be said. Lubbock's experiments do not lead him to think that ants of the same nest recognise one another by means of a sign or password. It has been supposed by some observers that ants recognise one another by smell; but this does not meet with our author's support; as it is difficult, considering the immense number of ants' nests, to suppose that each community can have a separate and peculiar smell.

There are many other features in connection with ants and ant-economy that might prove of interest to our readers, but which space does not permit of our entering upon. The book, however, which has formed the subject of this notice, is sufficient to satisfy the most rapacious inquirer; and the numerous experiments which are here so carefully and elaborately detailed, enable the reader, almost equally with the author, to judge for himself as to the conclusions that are drawn. The book cannot fail to add largely to the already high reputation of Sir John Lubbock in the scientific world.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—'DID THE RETURN OF ONE OF HER LOVERS PLEASE HER, EVEN THOUGH HE WERE NOT THE CHOSEN?'

WITH no more than a casual glance at his solitary travelling-companion, Gerard folded himself in his rug and disposed himself to sleep. Val found the situation eminently trying. He had made a sacrifice to honour on the clear and definite understanding that he was not to lose by it. It was a direct bid for a bargain with Fate, and Fate had declined to accept the bond of the bargain. He was positively losing by his sacri-

fice after all, and for once in a way, honesty was not the best policy. It is undeniable that Honour is a hard mistress to such as serve her with divided hearts. She will have everything her own way, or—she punishes. She will not tolerate anything done for reward. She is the desert of reward, and not the payment of it. Val had obeyed her with a divided loyalty, and was already far advanced on the track of repentance. Mr Charles Reade says, with that savage incisiveness which belongs to him, that our truest repentances are reserved for our best actions. That is a hard and bitter saying; but there is truth in it, if it is not altogether true; and here was Val bewailing himself that he had not held the master-card and played it, though the Knave's face grinned from the cardboard. If honour's path were smooth, would we not all rather tread in it than otherwise! Who will invent some scheme of self-sacrifice-made-easy, and invite us all to purchasable saintship? No man elects to be a rogue, for the sake of being one. To despise one's self is no luxury.

If you desire to know how all the obstacles he met with swelled Val's passion, you may find for yourself a world-old illustration by dropping an impediment in the first country streamlet or town gutter you may come to. How the small stream suddenly swells and rages! Do but grant that its sources will not dry up, and that you go on building up impediments, and out of any village runlet you may secure a flood which, breaking loose at last, will sweep away houses. And Val's love, which, if its current had run smoothly, might have been a placid stream enough, had long since grown torrent-like and overwhelming.

Gerard had been in his way all along, but now he barred Val's physical egress from this unpleasant corner. Placidly sleeping, he stretched his legs from one seat to the other, and there was no getting past him without the chance of recognition; and Val, for his own purposes, was anxious not to be recognised. Constance was free to accept the proffer of any man's hand, and Val was of course equally free to make proffer of his own; but it was natural that he should not care to be met by his rival on a journey which had that end in view. The train made its customary stoppages, and at each of them he would willingly have escaped to another carriage; but he did not choose to venture on the experiment. In spite of his loss of sleep the night before, Gerard's presence kept him awake, and at every stir the sleeper made, he fixed his protecting collar anew and gave a tug at his travelling-cap. But the sleeper went on sleeping to the journey's end, and therein took another unconscious advantage, of which Val was conscious. Sullenly determined not to be recognised, Val coiled himself in his corner until Gerard had gathered up his belongings and had left the

carriage. But if he were to preserve his presence as a secret, he must seek another hotel than that in which Constance and Gerard would alike be domiciled, and thus would he be at a new disadvantage. Well, then, he would accept the chance of observation, and with this resolve he followed into the *Grand Hotel*, and after a bath, sat down to write a note, informing Constance of his presence, and begging her most urgently to see him.

In the meantime, Gerard, having made his toilet, had already shaken hands with Mr Jolly and with Reginald. He had not been aware of the race against a rival; but he had wired that he was coming, and they had both arisen early to meet him. Mr Jolly was prepared to protect his daughter from any renewed proposals from the bankrupt lover. Reginald was ready if need were to come in as a moral buffer between the forces which seemed certain to attack each other. The elder man was posed in an attitude of conscious dignity when Gerard entered. The lad's face was radiant as he came in, and he advanced with both hands outstretching.

'Congratulate me!' were his first words. 'Everything that fellow Garling ran away with, is recovered!'—Mr Jolly's attitude of dignity went suddenly to pieces, and he was all amazement.—Gerard told the story briefly, and explained exactly how matters stood. He told by what strange accident the missing papers had been discovered; and at the mention of Val Strange's name, the younger listener hid himself behind his eyeglass and gave vent to an expressive whistle, which neither of the others noticed. Mr Jolly had a good deal to think of, and not a great deal of time in which to turn it over. The firm would start again, so Gerard said, in answer to inquiry: everybody had been paid to the uttermost farthing; the news of the recovery of the stolen capital would be bruited abroad; and the House would stand as well as ever in the eyes of the world. That was all well; but in the meantime Gerard was undoubtedly many thousands poorer than he had been. Still, at his father's death he would have everything—a hundred and thirty thousand pounds, a noble house and a fine park, his mother's fortune—whatever that might amount to—and a share in the profits of the rehabilitated firm. Yes—perhaps he might risk assent again. Constance was fretting a good deal, and Mr Jolly had a hundred times declared that women were incomprehensible. She had treated the man as if he had been one icicle and she another, whilst she was sure of marrying him; and now that she had lost what apparently she had never cared for, she was moping and melancholy, and in love with solitude. The girl was evidently grieving for him. Let her have him back. Poor Mr Jolly's life had been a burden these six weeks. From the hour of her mother's death, Constance's future had been a trouble to him; and just when, with unexpected ease and good fortune, he had shelved

the weight, and was prepared to enjoy the world—an unencumbered widower—she had come back upon him, and the brilliant engagement had ended in a tragical fiasco. Of course he did not guess that any other trouble weighed upon his daughter's mind, but the tears that seemed shed for Gerard were mainly shed for Val's desertion of her. She had not wept long, but a settled languor was upon her still, and the world seemed to have lost all charm and interest. When he had rapidly turned over such of these considerations as occurred to him, Mr Jolly spoke.

'My dear Gerard,' he said, in his Disraelian manner, 'when you first approached me upon this question, I did myself the justice to assure you that I had but one object to achieve, and that that object was my daughter's happiness. If I had not thought you likely to promote the attainment of that object, I should never have encouraged you in your approach to her affections.'—The profane Reginald murmured 'Hear! hear!' and his undertone was so ill-measured that the interruption was audible to his father.—That ideal parent turned a glance of reproach upon him, and continued: 'Approach to her affections. For I am not one of those who would consent to see marriage degraded to the level of a sordid tie, or reduced to the baseness of a business negotiation.' He felt himself to be in fine oratorical form, and would have been glad to admit all English-speaking people then in Paris, that they might see how well he bore it off. There was always a shadowy audience in his mind when he laid himself out in the pursuit of conversational excellence. He felt now—in a nebulous, vague way, be it understood—as if he harangued the inhabitants of listening spheres, and that he was more like his model than common. 'With that candour which has always seemed to me one of your most attractive characteristics, you tell me that your financial position is not altogether what it was. If the financial position'—he said this with a playful flourish and a smile—'had been your only recommendation, that would have weighed against you. But, as matters stand, I resume my old position. I take a position of friendly neutrality, Gerard. You did not consult me when, in pursuance of the dictates of an honourable delicacy, you withdrew from your engagement; or perhaps I might have been unworlily and unwise enough to combat your resolve. You do me the honour to consult me now; but I waive all right of veto, and I refer you to the person most interested. I preserve my neutrality strictly, but I wish you well. I have no influence, or if I possess influence, I conceive that I exercise my parental duties best by refusing to exert it. God bless you!' Mr Jolly suddenly and unexpectedly wrung Gerard's hand, and producing his handkerchief, gave it a solemn flourish and hid his countenance. It is probable that he had not the remotest notion of being a humbug. If he began by expressing his own magnanimity, he always ended by believing in it.

Gerard knew him better than of old; but he was not keen in observation; and he liked to believe in people; being himself of a most honest and faithful nature. So he returned the grip

with interest, and left the model father's knuckles limp and aching. Reginald meanwhile smoothed his baldness with a doubtful grin, expressive of a sentiment half-way between shame and amusement. And if he kept silence with respect to his father's emotion, it may be that he thought the mere. His own congratulations were brief and hearty.

'Look here,' he said; 'I'll go and tell Constance you're here;' and with that intent he sped in search of Miss Lucretia's maid. It so happened that Val's servant was at the moment of Reginald's arrival on the scene in search of that damsel, being intrusted to deliver to her care his master's note. The wily youth saw him, and marvelled. 'Is Val here?' he asked himself. If he were there, it could be for but one object. Reginald's sympathies, like other things human, were liable to fluctuations. He had been moved by Val's distress when he parted with him; but he had been moved since then by the tremendous calamities which had fallen upon Gerard. Val had not acted altogether well in pursuing Constance after her engagement to Gerard; whilst his rival had borne himself to Reginald's mind, splendidly, beneath misfortunes almost unexampled. So that now the balance of Reginald's sympathies was with Gerard. But bethinking himself that Strange had had it in his power to delay his rival's good-fortune, he appreciated his honour at the full, and being thus tugged by both, he decided not to interfere with either. 'Let 'em fight it out between 'em,' he said viciously. But by intercepting Miss Lucretia's maid, he interfered without knowing it. 'Is my sister up?' he asked.

'O yes, sir,' the maid responded; 'she took coffee half an hour ago.'

'Did she, my dear?' he returned with a fatherly air. 'Well, it's of no use for me to make love to you, because I know the noble Duke your father won't let you marry out of the Harry-storacy, and I'm as poor as Job. So just you run and tell her that I want to see her. Will you? There's a darling!'

The damsel murmured something, of which 'Impudence' alone was audible, and departed on her errand with an air of scorn. But being out of sight, she stopped to giggle.

'They're very nice,' said the bald-headed young man, putting up his glass to look after her—'they're very nice, all of 'em; but are they worth the trouble we take about 'em?'

The maid returned before he had found an answer to that query. 'Miss Constance says you will see her in her dressing-room.'

'I'll say nothing at all about Val,' Reginald decided as he entered his sister's room. Constance sat at the window, and looked at him with a languid and uninterested air as he entered. To her surprise, he kissed her before sitting down. 'Con, my dear,' he said, 'I have news for you. Who do you think is here?'

'I never cared for riddles,' she answered. 'Who is here?'

'Gerard came from London this morning. He has recovered all the stolen money, and is nearly as well-off as ever. He wants to see you. Will you come to him?'

Now, this was not altogether leaving the rivals to fight it out between themselves; but then you

and I are not the only inconsistent people in the world. He was beginning to get interested in spite of himself. Constance was very pale of late, but at this news a gentle colour stole to her cheek. Did the return of one of her lovers please her, even though he were not the chosen? The six weeks and more which had gone since Val's departure had not left her unchanged. For six weeks she had been free and lonely. Val had expatriated himself, and at his going, she had done her deliberate best to root him from her heart. Then she had pitied Gerard, and had felt more kindly to him since his misfortunes. She had seen his honest clear gray eyes clouded with the agony of his sorrows. She had thought often of that despairing gesture with which he had turned away from her, and the eloquent cry, low yet terrible, with which he had released her. She did not love him; but she was not devoid of pity, and she was left alone. And operating with these factors of pity and loneliness was the fact of his former claim. Had the two men stood side by side, she would not have chosen Gerard. But the man she would have chosen had gone away on purpose to forget her, and she had schooled herself to know it. She remembered how deeply interested her father had been in Gerard's success, and supposed the interest renewed. In these late days, life had had neither salt nor savour. And so in brief she resigned herself, and when Reginald asked his question, she responded 'Yes,' and arose languidly, yet with a little blush upon her cheek, born of I know not what emotion.

She was dressed in some light-coloured diaphanous stuff which had soft and graceful folds, and she wore just a touch of warmer colour at the throat. To Gerard's eyes, as she approached him, her pallor and her languor lent her a new beauty. But he had never seen her without thinking that she looked more beautiful than ever. And now he was lover all over, and trouble vanished, and care took flight. He kissed her hand, purely and simply because he could not help it, despite the presence of her father and her brother. Mr. Jolly made a second oration in parliamentary form, Reginald left the room to escape it, and neither Gerard nor Constance paid much heed to it—Gerard, because he was filled with his own happiness; nor Constance, because her father's heavy solemnity of platitude was always wearisome. Pleasantly unconscious of this tacit disdain, the model father flowed along. He took Constance's approval for granted, and evidently regarded a renewal of the engagement, under the conditions, as a thing needing his own consent and nothing more. She had supposed that this was his view of the affair; and, for her—what did it matter? By-and-by, the model parent having sufficiently aired himself, withdrew, and there came an hour which made Gerard an atonement for his griefs. He knelt at Constance's side with both her hands in his, and eloquent for once in his life, he told her how more than happy he was, and how more than wretched he had been.

'And you have grieved for me too,' he murmured, kissing her hands again and again. A man whose scholarship goes no further than the Latin quotations at the end of a pocket edition

of Johnson, knows—*Credula res amor est*. She was pale, and ah! it was sweet to think she had grown pale in grieving for him, so sweet he could but think it. And she would give no denial. Why should she pain him? He had suffered, and he loved her, and it was in her power to make him happy, and it was worth something in a world so forlorn to be able to make anybody happy. And let not the male reader accept this as a commonplace. It was proof of a nature which was at bottom indubitably noble. For, as a rule, a woman—as the greatest Englishwoman of this century has told us—discerns not a sex as we do, but an individual. She loves one—one who belongs to her: she has no passion for humanity. Loving Dick, she defies him, but is quite contemptuous about Tom and William, who are all round ten times better fellows; and should Tom or William make love to her, she snubs him, and despises him for it. That Dick loves her, is Dick's glory and her own; but a planetful of outside males might kneel and she deride. It was, then, anything but a feminine trait in Constance that she listened with pity and yielding to the love-tale of a man she did not love. Her hands were cool in his grasp. Her pulse beat no faster because of his kisses and his vows. Since Fate resigned her to him, she would be true to him; and if she could make him happy, it was something. But she—had she ever been happy? Would she ever be happy any more?

Then, not to break, but to continue Gerard's dream, came breakfast. It was his first happy meal for so long, and it is true, as John Dryden sang, 'sweet is pleasure—sweet is pleasure after pain.'

'I protest,' said Reginald, scrutinising a cutlet, and appropriating it, 'that I feel Arcadian. Let us go and picnic somewhere. It is going to be a lovely day. Let us go to St-Cloud or to the Bois. Let us go to the Bois, and take a hamper, and lunch in the shade like M. Lebon Epicier and his house on a summer Sunday. —Eh, governor?—What do you say, Aunt Lucretia?'

'Let us go to St-Cloud by all means,' returned the old lady. She was in a condition of tremulous happiness at Constance's recovery of her lover, and had already taken a fancy to Gerard. To be sure, his affairs were no longer colossal, which was of itself a pity; but he was so big and genial, so bright and tender and devoted, that her heart warmed to him.

'Shall we go, Constance?' asked Mr Jolly.

'By all means,' said Constance, trying to look as if the proposal pleased her.

'I haven't seen St-Cloud since I was a boy,' said happy Gerard. So the jaunt was reckoned settled. The sleeping and dressing rooms occupied by Mr Jolly and his son were, *en suite* with the breakfast-room, but the ladies slept at the end of the corridor. Constance gave her arm to Miss Lucretia, and the faded old woman and the beautiful girl went out together, making a pretty picture. The rooms Val Strange had taken opened on that corridor, and he saw them as they passed his open door. All this time whilst Gerard had been happy, Val had been waiting in suspense, and torturing himself with fears, which were better grounded even than he feared, for his hope

fought them half down, and would not give them sway. Two minutes later, Gerard passed, elate, with his head high and a radiant smile upon his face, humming *La donna e mobile*. The broad staircase faced Val's door, and Gerard went springing up it three steps at a time.

'He has won!' cried Val wildly; and with a savage gesture, he slammed the door and cast himself into a chair. The very carriage of Gerard's figure bespoke triumph; the gay air he hummed, the smile upon his face, sang triumph! 'Won? Has he won? He laughs best who laughs last, and I will win or die. She does not care for him. Fool that I was to run away. Had I stayed in England, she would have been mine by now, and no man could have come between us. O Constance! Not a word yet? not a line? Do you know that I am here?'

When Constance reached her own room, Miss Lucretia's maid presented her with a note. The handwriting was not known to her; and turning first to the signature, she was seized with a sudden tremor, so that the very paper rustled in her hand. The maid looked at her curiously. 'You may attend your mistress,' said Constance quietly. 'I shall not trouble you this morning.'

Mr Jolly, after the failure of Lumby and Lumby, had begun to retrench. He had spent a good deal of money on the strength of Constance's engagement, and when it seemed that nothing was to come of it, he retrenched. With Mr Jolly, retrenchment naturally tended to the docking of other people's little comforts rather than his own, and one of his economic measures was to refuse vote of supply for Constance's maid.

'I returned to England two days ago,' ran the note, beginning thus abruptly and without preface, 'and learned that you were free. I should have been here a day sooner, but I waited to restore Gerard's fortune to his hands. I could not rob him of everything. I will explain this when I see you. You will let me see you for a moment? You know my love already. I can speak now without dishonour, and can tell you that I love you still, that I have loved you from the hour I first saw you, and shall love you to the last hour of my life. You know all this already. I have waited, and I have despaired; but new hope brings new pain. Forgive me, if I seem to say too much, or if I seem to say it too unguardedly.—Yours, V. S.'

She sat for a long time over these impassioned words. To you or to me, they may seem no more than words, and 'like a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong.' But eloquence is in the ears that hear more than the tongue that speaks, and with every word she read—true sign of love—she heard Val's voice pleading in it. He had been so near after all; and in place of mere cold duty, she might have had love and no breach of duty with it, had she been spared from Gerard for but two hours. Her tears fell heavily upon the paper, like the drops that fall at the beginning of a storm. She kissed the honeyed cruel words that told of the love she longed for; and suddenly starting up, she thrust the letter in her bosom, and began to dress. She would tell Gerard how unhappy she was, and beg him to release her. Her plighted word of half a year since still bound her after this morning's

tacit re-acceptance of the bond. But Gerard was a man and a man of honour. He would release her if she claimed release, and she would claim it. She could almost love him if he let her go.

Her mind being made up to this, she recurred to the mysterious phrases in Val's letter—'I waited to restore Gerard's fortune to his hands. I could not rob him of everything.' Being unable to find any meaning for them, she sought her aunt's room. 'Aunt dear,' she said, 'I have not heard how the fortune came back again. Can you tell me?'

'I am not a business woman, my dear,' said Miss Lucretia, whose gray locks were just then in the hands of her maid; 'but, as I understand the matter from your father, a friend of Mr Lumby's found the money—a Mr Grainger. I wonder if he were one of the Essex Graingers? I knew the Essex Graingers years ago. They were very prying people, and quite likely to find anything that was hidden anywhere.'

'Was it not Mr Strange who found the money?' asked Constance.—'Mr Valentine Strange?'

'Was it?' cried the old lady. 'Valentine? What a stupid way of speaking, your father has, my dear. He puts *er* at the end of everything. O yes, my dear. Of course it was Valentine Strange. He has a paper-mill. O yes, of course. And he found the money in bank notes—a million pounds' worth, only some of it belongs to other people—and the poor mad gentleman is supposed to have hidden them in the waste-paper after the other gentleman had stolen them. Although of course it is absurd to speak of him as a gentleman. I am so glad to know that it was Valentine Strange.'

Constance was not greatly enlightened as to the history of the case, but she understood enough. Val would not rob Gerard of his fortune for an hour, or take away his chance of an appeal to her. 'He shall not be unhappy,' she said to herself, 'because he has acted so nobly, and has waited to give his rival a chance before he spoke. How splendid of him! How manly! How chivalrous!'

She resolved anew that she would appeal to Gerard; but she had reckoned without herself, for when he and she were left alone that day at St-Cloud, she could not find courage to speak. She put it off. She would write to him. It would be easier to write. And Val meantime went unanswered, and saw them going away, and watched them, hours after, as they came in again, himself unseen. As Constance walked along the corridor to her room that night, Gerard overtook her at Val's door, and not guessing who waited and listened there, he said good-night with a tender triumph in his tone at which Val clenched his hands and maddened.

'Good-night, darling,' said Gerard. 'Can you guess how happy you have made me? Good-night.'

'Good-night, Gerard,' returned Constance. She wanted so much to propitiate him, she dreaded so much to give him pain, that her voice was tenderer than she knew. How could she be so cruel as to dismiss him? How could she be so cruel to herself and Val as not to dismiss him? Gerard with one foot on the staircase watched

until the door closed behind her, and then went slowly up the stair. Val's pale face from his dark chamber doorway looked after him.

'She has left my note unanswered all day long,' he moaned. 'If I have been mistaken! If she loves him after all! If!—'

RECENT EXPERIMENTS IN SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE.

PHOSPHATE of lime, as found in bones, has long been a favourite manure with farmers, especially for root-crops, and so great has been the benefit derived from the use of 'dissolved bones,' that the supply has had to be supplemented from mineral sources. At first, bones were simply crushed, or ground to a coarse, sawdust-like powder; but latterly, superphosphate has been found more active and beneficial to the crop to which it has been immediately applied. The consequence of this is that bones are now generally treated with sulphuric acid, whereby most of the phosphate of lime is rendered soluble; and by this process the superphosphate is obtained. By reason of its solubility, this substance is very easily distributed through the soil, where it speedily takes up lime, and becomes again of the nature of bone-earth. The old idea was that it was quickly absorbed by the roots of plants, by reason of its solubility; but it is now generally agreed that its superiority lies in its distributive powers.

In practice, it has been found that soluble phosphates from bones, and from such mineral phosphates as coprolite, are identical in composition and in value; hence, manufacturers use mineral phosphates largely in the use of phosphatic manures; indeed, such have become necessary, for the demand is so great, that bones sufficient to supply it are not forthcoming. But while dissolved phosphates have always been valued, undissolved mineral phosphates have been regarded with but scant favour. Even the bone-ash which manufacturers have so largely imported from South America and elsewhere—derived from the cattle which are slaughtered for the sake of their hides, tallow, and bones, and the dried bones and flesh used as fuel—has been hitherto considered of little value unless treated with sulphuric acid. That this conclusion has been too hastily arrived at, seems evident in the light of recent experiments, some of which we propose laying before our readers.

The question is an eminently practical one, for the preparation of phosphates by sulphuric acid is a costly process. If—as there seems little room to doubt—phosphates can be rendered equally efficacious by a much cheaper method, and equally large crops raised for considerably less outlay, the question becomes one of national importance, and supremely so to farmers and landlords. In some recent experiments in Aberdeenshire and in Sussex, 'economy was reached by mixing the cheapest phosphate (*ground coprolite*) with that sold at a moderate cost (*steamed bone-flour*). Of roots only—not taking into account the wheat-crop—there were about seventy-one thousand acres in Sussex, and assuming that out of thirty shillings which is calculated to be annually spent per acre, one-third, or ten

shillings, could be saved by using *undissolved* phosphate, the saving in Sussex alone would be over thirty-five thousand pounds annually. These words are from a Report by an able chemist specially deputed to experiment with manures in the county of Sussex; and the results amply bear out what has been quoted. As universal opinion is almost wholly against this view being realised, we will quote some of the results obtained.

The first experiments that we are aware of where soluble and insoluble phosphates were fairly pitted against each other, were those conducted in Aberdeenshire a year or two ago. After some preliminary experimenting, it was resolved to try a mixture of coprolite and steamed bone-flour against an equal quantity of crushed bones and dissolved bones. The results were practically the same—only the first mixture cost twenty-eight shillings, while the other cost forty-two shillings.

After the experiments had been repeated for some time on the same soil, it was found that the disease which attacked the turnips was invariably aggravated on the plots to which *dissolved* bones had been applied. The evidence went to show that the disease was associated with a fungus on the one hand and with sulphur on the other. As turnips are distinguished from other plants by a volatile oil rich in sulphur, the inference is, that the application of bones treated with sulphuric acid does mischief, by providing sulphur to feed the disease.

When phosphates were applied to the hay-crop, the increase was at the rate of twenty per cent, whether applied dissolved or undissolved, whether derived from the animal or mineral kingdom. This seems to prove that the low value put upon undissolved mineral phosphates has been arrived at too hurriedly and without due trial. It also shows that further experiments are needed to throw light on the manner of assimilation of plant-food, as well as its absorption by roots.

Last season, at Preston (Sussex), artificial manure, the phosphates of which were rendered soluble, produced fourteen tons seven hundredweight of Swedish turnips per acre at a cost for manure of five pounds. On the same ground, under the same conditions, with the same manure, but with *undissolved* phosphate—a mixture of bone-flour and coprolite—fourteen tons two hundredweight were produced at a cost for manure of two pounds seventeen shillings and ninepence. The difference in the crop was slight; in the cost of the manure, very considerable. When pure dissolved bones were employed, the results were only eleven tons four hundredweight, and the cost three pounds three shillings and ninepence; when undissolved coprolite and sulphate of lime, the result was twelve tons eight hundredweight, and the cost two pounds one shilling and ninepence. On this soil, nine tons fourteen hundredweight were produced without any manure. The difference over that weight must therefore be looked upon as increase.

In 1881, at Preston, a mixture of *ground* coprolite, bone-flour, and sulphate of lime, along with twelve and a half tons of farmyard manure per acre, produced seventeen tons five hundredweight of white turnips, the cost of the mineral matter being twenty-eight shillings and eight-

pence. When commercial *dissolved* bones, costing forty-five shillings, were substituted, the yield was only fourteen tons two hundredweight. When to the mineral *undissolved* manure, there were added potash and magnesia, twenty tons an acre were secured, at a cost of two pounds four shillings and elevenpence. As Mr Jamieson says in his Report of the experiments: 'True economy in agriculture, however, is not to be attained by a simple lessening of expense, but by attaining the greatest production with the greatest profit. The use of the bone-flour and coprolite is but one step in this direction; another step was essayed in making the mixture "complete" by the addition of potash and magnesia.' And further on: 'Probably one of the reasons why dissolved manures have been able to maintain the position generally given to them, is that they give a flush of leaf and an appearance of healthy growth in the earlier stages of growth. Not unlikely, the same reason hinders the acceptance of the *undissolved* mineral phosphates; for, when used alone, the crop is always rather backward at first. When used along with steamed bone-flour, however, the early growth is accelerated without being hastened to an unhealthy extent, and the quality of the produce is generally better.'

Chemists are generally agreed that plants require seven different elements from the soil in order to enable them to make healthy growth. These elements are—phosphorus, potash, magnesia, lime, sulphur, iron, and nitrogen. Experiments have been repeatedly made to prove that these are essential to plant-growth. Others are often found, even in great quantity, such as silica, soda, chlorine, &c.; but as many plants have been grown to perfection without them, their presence is considered accidental, and not essential. At one of the stations in Sussex where experiments were conducted last year, namely, Hassocks Gate, the soil was particularly suitable for strictly scientific investigation, for it was a pure sand, containing hardly any traces of plant-food. On this soil, turnips, even when supplied with everything except phosphate, merely lived without increasing in bulk. When ground coprolite was applied in addition, the produce, even in this miserable soil, at once went up to twenty tons an acre!

When potash salts are used along with other matters to form artificial manures, the chloride is invariably chosen, because it is cheaper and more soluble than sulphate of potash. In America, and we believe in this country, chloride salts of any kind have been found to produce watery potatoes. At Hassocks Gate, the use of chloride of potash proved utterly destructive—it killed everything. After-experiments proved that in ordinary soil, containing black mould, the remains of decaying vegetation, it was perfectly harmless. This fact is worth noting by farmers whose land is very light and sandy. It was also found that mixing nitrate of soda with the salt rendered it harmless. Mr Jamieson considers that the plants use the nitric acid of the nitrate and the potash of the chloride, and that the soda left over from the nitrate combines with the chlorine left over from the chloride to form common salt, which is not injurious in small quantity, and is easily washed away by rain.

Apart from the question, whether it is more economical to use dissolved or undissolved phosphates for turnips, these experiments go to show that it is best to use artificial manures as auxiliaries rather than sole manures. The best results generally follow when half stableyard and half artificial manure is used. It is unnecessary to dwell on this, as it is only a confirmation of what intelligent farmers have observed.

At Easter Ardross, similar experiments were made, also proving the value of undissolved phosphates, but not so markedly as in Aberdeenshire and Sussex. At the same time, it ought to be added that at Easter Ardross it was as much a trial of the different forms of nitrogen as of dissolved and undissolved phosphates, and as no precautionary mixture—that is, everything else—was added, the results were hardly so trustworthy. However, it may interest our readers to know that when undissolved phosphates alone were applied, the increase in the crop was at the rate of seventy-eight and a half per cent. When dissolved phosphates were given, the increase was one hundred and forty-six per cent. And when an 'ammoniacal phosphate of magnesia' named 'finus'—manufactured from the sewage of Birmingham—was applied in quantity sufficient to make the nitrogen combined with it equal to the nitrogen in the other plots, but with only half the phosphates, the increase was one hundred and sixty-six and a half per cent. When sufficient was given to make the phosphorus equal to that in the other plots, the increase was two hundred and thirteen and a half per cent., or twenty-six tons thirteen and a half hundredweight per acre. From different sources, we learn that this 'finus' has produced extraordinary results in all kinds of field and garden crops, especially benefiting poor worn-out pastures. Agricultural chemists have hitherto paid more attention to phosphoric acid—as found in phosphates—potash, and nitrogen, than to the other necessary elements of plant-food; but the wonderful success of 'finus' raises the question whether magnesia be not equally important. As we understand special investigations are being made this year in different quarters to ascertain the true value of magnesia, we will not in the meantime refer further to the question.

While scientific experiments in England and Scotland have proved that phosphates are particularly favourable to mangold-wurzels, turnips, and cereals, and that a proper use of undissolved phosphates is preferable to dissolved phosphates, because more economical; in Ireland, the value of potash salts for potatoes has been demonstrated. While open farmyard manure, applied at the rate of thirty tons per acre, gave thirteen tons fifteen hundredweight, and the same amount collected under cover gave sixteen tons thirteen hundredweight; two hundredweight of kainite (crude potash salts from mines in Germany) gave thirteen tons nineteen hundredweight, and four hundredweight gave fourteen tons six hundredweight. (Without any kind of manure, the yield was only five tons.) When, however, two hundredweight of kainite was mixed with an equal quantity of American phosphate, the resulting crop was in one instance as high as fifteen tons fifteen hundredweight; and with Curaçoa

phosphate, fifteen tons nineteen hundredweight. When Alta Vela phosphate was used, the result was fifteen tons. When bone superphosphate (the dearest phosphate) was used, the result was fourteen tons six hundredweight; and with mineral superphosphate, in one case thirteen tons nineteen hundredweight; and in another, fourteen tons two hundredweight. When phosphates alone were used, the crops were much smaller, the very largest being a little over nine tons, but the majority being much less. As the withholding of potash from turnips does not markedly lessen the produce, we can here see that potash salts have a peculiar influence on potatoes. Indeed, speaking broadly, potatoes demand potash; turnips, phosphates; and cereals, nitrogen. In no case in the Irish experiment did the addition of nitrogen in the form of sulphate of ammonia or nitrate of soda, increase the potato crop, but rather the reverse. This should be noted, because farmers are apt to look upon these as the artificial manures *par excellence*. In the case of turnips, the crop is apparently, but not really increased by their use. The gross weight may be, and is, increased; but the increase is only water, the dry weight being very seldom increased. This is an evil; for the firmer roots are, the better do they keep, and the less work there is in carrying and handling a given weight of a given amount of nourishment. Money thus spent is misspent—thrown away, and worse. When these manures are applied to cereals, however, the increase is real and substantial.

It has long been known that animal organisms are the agents whereby organic remains are quickly resolved into their component elements, and 'dust returned to dust.' Only lately, however, has it been discovered that germs have the power of changing such a semi-mineral substance as ammonia into nitric acid. That the chemical change did take place, was known; but under what condition and how, was mere guesswork. The discoveries of Schoelosing and Muntz on the continent, confirmed as they have been in this country by Messrs Lawes, Gilbert, and Warrington, leave no room to doubt that the work is done by those minute organisms termed bacteria.

The discovery is one of great importance to agriculturists and sanitariums alike. Briefly stated, it explodes the current belief that ammonia once fixed by the soil remains there till the roots search it out and utilise it. The fact proved is, that no sooner does ammonia become fixed in the soil, than the bacteria seize it, and, quicker or slower, according to the temperature, convert it into nitric acid, which, seizing on lime, potash, or other base, becomes a salt that is very easily, and indeed *is*, to a great extent, washed away and lost. This discovery should do much to prevent the waste of the most valuable constituent of manure—for ammonia is worth one hundred pounds per ton—and when its bearings are realised we shall find the preparation and application of manures carried out in a way very different from the present.

To sanitary authorities, the matter is no less interesting. Bacteria only exist in the presence of decaying organic matter; they swarm in all fertile surface soils; they are probably absent

from all subsoils and pure sands. To pass sewage through subsoil or sand—as is the usual way in sewage-farms—is merely to keep back matter in suspension, and allow soluble nitrogenous matter to pass into and pollute drains and streams. When—as has in some cases been done—deep filters are made of *surface* soil, this objectionable matter is got rid of by being converted into nitrate, which is unobjectionable. Moreover, filters so constructed require a small area as compared with sewage-farms, for now that the matter is better understood, *depth* may be made to take the place of width.

AN AMUSING EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A POET.

PARNY the French poet, who enshrined in charming verse the graces of Eléonore, the woman he loved, is perhaps not much known to the English reader. He bore the title of Chevalier, afterwards Vicomte de Parny; and was a native of the Isle of Bourbon, where he was born in 1753. At the age of nine he was sent to France, with the view of entering the Church; but after a time he resolved to exchange the cassock for the sword. After completing his studies in the Military School, he returned to his native isle. He was then twenty years of age. Here he fell in love with a young Creole lady, whom he named Eléonore in his verse; but whose real name was Esther de Bauff. Their mutual love inspired his first poetical effusions, which are graceful and sincere, though possessing a degree of warmth which, to English readers, may seem to savour somewhat of affectation. In France, however, his love-poems were received with the utmost enthusiasm; and when, in 1775, he published his first collection of elegiac verses, he was speedily spoken of by his numerous admirers as the French Tibullus. In the after-course of his life, he experienced various reverses of fortune, and died in Paris in 1814.

Parny, whose nature was timid and retiring, once met with an amusing adventure in Paris, which is worth relating. He was in the habit of buying his books of a certain M. Frocard, a learned and upright man, who took delight in procuring for Parny rare works of great authors which he met with at sales, charging the poet only the commission. His shop was small, his business somewhat injured by the Revolution. He had been forced to establish a secret warehouse in the Rue de Verneuil, where he kept rare volumes, and those works which were at that time prohibited. One day Parny came to him for a book which he urgently required.

'I haven't it here,' said Frocard; 'it is at the warehouse. If I were not alone, I would go and fetch it.'

'Go, pray,' said Parny; 'I will keep shop for you.' So saying, he seated himself on the counter, and began to write some verses of a new poem upon which he was at work. As he was in the very heat of composition, there entered one of those pretenders to learning, who, having picked up a little of the jargon of society, mingled with a few quotations and a few well-prepared phrases, manage to hide their ignorance till they meet with a scholar. This person, seeing a pale, dried-

up-looking man, half bald, dressed in an old gray coat, in possession of the counter, naturally took him for the bookseller, and asked him in a perfectly assured tone of voice to let him see a copy of the Marotic poems. Parny felt bound to supply the place of M. Frocard, and not to permit him to lose a customer; so, searching for the works of Clement Marot, he handed them to the unknown buyer, who, opening the first volume, read a few lines.

'What does all this mean?' cried he. 'This is not what I want.'

'Did you not ask me for the Marotic poems?' asked Parny.

'Those are not the poems, my good fellow, nothing like them.'

'I do not know of any others.'

'I want the Marotic poems, those about Eléonore.'

'I only know of some by Parny,' said the poet, reddening and hesitating.

'Parny! That's the man—his Marotic poems.'

'Erotic, you mean, do you not?'

'Erotic, Marotic—well, they are much the same thing.'

'Yes; much the same,' said Parny, repressing a smile as he reckoned up his man.—'Here they are,' he added, handing him two elegant volumes, morocco bound and gilt-edged.

'The price?'

'Upon my word, I hardly know.'

'What! you don't know the price of your books?'

'The binding of these two little volumes may be worth more than the text; but I think they must be worth six francs.'

'You will allow me the discount to literary men?'

'No; I cannot, conscientiously,' said Parny significantly.

'Well, if you cannot, I suppose I must pay the full price;' and the unknown paid his money and left the shop, bestowing a patronising glance on the person, whom he little dreamed was the author of the charming poems he was carrying away, and from which he intended to cull the fresh beauties that would help him to shine, that should establish his pretension as a *bel esprit*.

In a few minutes, M. Frocard returned, carrying the book he had been seeking. Parny laughingly related the comical scene which had just taken place.

'And what did you ask for your books?'

'Six francs.'

'Not half their value!'

'What! two little vols in sixteenmo!'

'Vellum paper, illustrated initials, Courteval binding—twelve francs, I can tell you; the edition is exhausted, and it was my last copy.'

'Upon my word, I did not think my works—'

'You are the only person who does not know their value.'

'Listen, Frocard. You must not lose by my ignorance. My customer has so amused me, that I most willingly indemnify you for the loss I have caused you.'

'By no means, Monsieur de Parny.'

'Yes; I insist. I was your substitute. I ought to have understood my duty.'

As they were settling the matter, a carriage stopped before the door, and a lady entered—a lady as remarkable for her beauty as she was distinguished by her noble and graceful bearing. The calm succeeding the revolutionary tempest, had brought her to Paris. She addressed the bookseller as if she esteemed him; and he welcomed her with a respectful deference that announced a change of scene, and that this lady was as well informed as the would-be scholar was self-sufficient.

'My dear Monsieur Frocard,' said the lady, 'I want you to help me to repair a great loss that I have sustained in my travels. That rich chest which you transmitted to me so carefully, and which contained one hundred volumes of our finest poets, was, I suppose, badly fastened to the carriage, and has fallen off in the night. I have lost my best friends, my dearest travelling companions. I entreat you to renew this precious collection for me as soon as possible; and meanwhile give me the most precious among them, the works of the Chevalier de Parny.'

'I have not one copy, Madame; I have but a few minutes ago sold the last. I would, however, much rather see it in your hands than in those of the person who has bought it.'

'Well, then, pray get me another. It is my favourite book. I rank the author of *Éléonore* on a level with Ovid and Tibullus.'

'That is ranking him high, Madame,' ventured Parny with a smile, that seemed ironical and disdainful in the eyes of the fair unknown.

'You think so, sir?' said she coldly, taking him for one of those mediocre writers who too often are jealous of genius. 'I think you would find it difficult to name one of our poets, ancient or modern, who excels Parny in the purity and excellence of his style, his graceful softness and delicious abandon.'

'O women, women! The poet who sings of love has so much influence over your hearts.'

'Parny is doubtless dear to women; but he is equally dear to all who know how to appreciate true talent. His erotic poems are simply perfect; his elegies deeply touching. He is no servile imitator; his model is in his warm heart, his brilliant imagination. Like Tibullus, he is the poet of lovers; but less monotonous, more rich, more versatile. Like Catullus and Gallus, he is facile, ingenious, and often rises to the sublime. His *Déguisements de Vénus* rival those *Veillées* portrayed by Longus, with a charm, a touch that Parny alone can imitate.'

'Ah, Madame,' replied Parny, moved in spite of himself, 'I did not expect such an eager adversary. *Éléonore* herself, if she were here living, could not defend him more faithfully.'

'If I have convinced you, sir, of the merits of him who sings her charms, I shall congratulate myself on this interview; but if you persist in running him down, I warn you we shall quarrel every time we may chance to meet.'

'Such meetings, Madame, will have so much value in my eyes, that I should not wish to destroy their charm.'

'Your compliments will not change my opinion of Parny, whom I have never seen, and am dying to know. I consider him a scholar of the very first rank, an honour to the age. I declare that he has no living rival, and I pity

those who can neither understand nor appreciate him.' And so saying, the unknown beauty quitted the shop, casting on Parny a parting look, which showed him that she classed him with those wretched detractors whose business it is to deny the talent of their contemporaries, who attack reputations which are a torment to them, because they cannot hope to rise to such distinction.

'Who is this charming woman, who so warmly defends me against myself?' asked Parny of the bookseller, who was almost as much flattered as himself by this scene.

'It is the favourite pupil of Duclos and D'Alembert, a friend of letters, an ardent protectress of talent; delighting in surrounding herself with artists and literary men, honouring those already celebrated, helping them when they are struggling, assisting them with her countenance, her fortune. In a word, Monsieur, it is the Duchesse de R——.'

'Ah! I have often heard her name; but the idea I had formed of her, was nothing in comparison with the reality. What brilliant elocution! what fire in her eye! what irresistible grace! and what a perfect acquaintance with the elegiac poets!'

'It was the possession of all these charming qualities which made her capable of defending your charming productions. I tell you again, Monsieur de Parny, you are the only person who does not know their value.'

Our poet left his bookseller's, carrying with him the ineffaceable impression of this unforeseen rencontre.

Several months after, the re-organisation of the colleges took place under the titles of Primary Schools. Parny and another were appointed to the work. Professorships were eagerly sought. One day, among a crowd of applicants, a man presented himself whose pompous self-assured air was worthy a minister of state, or at least a member of the Institute. Being shown into the presence of Parny's colleague, he presented a petition requesting the post of Professor of Belles-lettres in the new establishment about to be founded. He was told that as the petitioner was quite unknown, it was indispensable that he should be recommended by some public functionary, who would attest his capacity.

'But I am my own referee,' said the petitioner. 'I thought true talent needed no other recommendation. I am astonished that you do not know me.—Parbleu!' cried he, as he perceived Parny, who just then entered, 'here is my bookseller, who will answer for me.'

'What!' cried Parny's colleague; 'Monsieur, your bookseller?'

'Yes,' replied Parny promptly, making a sign to the other; 'I had the honour, some time ago, to sell this gentleman the Marotic poems of Parny.'

'Erotic, my witty friend.'

'Erotic or Marotic—they are much the same thing,' replied the French Tibullus, with a grim smile.

At these words, the man seized his petition and disappeared without venturing on another word.

A few days after this occurrence, a lady entered

the office. She came to solicit a place for a well-known and highly respected Professor who wished to be established in Paris. She was told that the schools of the capital were under the direction of Monsieur de Parny.

'What!' cried she. 'Is Monsieur de Parny in the Office of Public Instruction? It is a post worthy of him. I rejoice in the chance which at last procures me the pleasure of knowing him.'

As she spoke, Monsieur de Parny appeared, dismissing several applicants. 'What!' cried he involuntarily, 'have I the pleasure of seeing the Duchesse de R—?'

'Who has come,' replied she, with a charming smile, 'to dispute with you again as to the works and genius of the Chevalier de Parny.'

'Ah, Madame,' said the poet, 'where shall I find weapons worthy of combating you? Now you know me, I have no longer the same advantage I had at my bookseller's. It is difficult to hear one's self praised by such lips, without modesty giving way to gratitude.' He then related to his colleague the scene which had passed in Trocard's shop.

The Duchess embellished the story with details in the most piquant manner. She obtained for her talented friend the place she solicited, and thenceforth felt for Parny an attachment and esteem that spread a grace and charm over his career, and contributed ultimately to open to him the doors of the Académie Française—a reward worthy of his genius.

THE GROWTH OF A PORT.

CARDIFF, now popularly termed the Metropolis of South Wales, is a striking instance of the rise and progress of a modern British port. Within living memory little better than a village, it now proudly vaunts itself our chief port in point of foreign coal shipments. One by one, other ports have been passed—even Newcastle itself lags behind in coal exportations to foreign countries—and the little Welsh place of two thousand inhabitants in 1801, has become a fine town of nearly ninety thousand inhabitants in 1882. The relative importance of Bristol is being continually lessened by this local growth of the nineteenth century, and there are not wanting those who boldly assert that Cardiff bids fair to become a second Liverpool. Of late years, too, there has been a more strenuous effort on the part of Cardiff merchants to secure an import traffic; and the development of this branch of trade is fraught with great good; for experience has taught most commercial men, that in the best colliery districts fluctuations will inevitably occur, chiefly from the disputes which unfortunately take place between employers and employed. The South Wales coal-field, whence Cardiff derives her vast coal-supplies, has not been exempt from disturbing influences; and in 1875 a prolonged strike and lock-out gave a most disastrous check to the tide of commercial prosperity. But a period of peace between the disputants has supervened, and the wages of the colliers are now amicably regulated by a Sliding Scale Committee, consisting of representatives of employers and workmen.

We have before us a book published in 1888, which states that Cardiff was a town upon the Taff, two miles from the sea. This brief description would have sufficed for a hundred years afterwards, as it was not until 1798 that the condition of the place underwent a change. In that year, the old Glamorganshire Canal from Merthyr to Cardiff—the proprietors of which still hold their meetings at the latter place—was opened, and its construction was due to the strong presumption that the black diamonds which lay in the adjacent hills and valleys demanded more adequate means of conveyance for shipment than that afforded by wagons and mules, which had hitherto brought the coal down to Cardiff in sacks. The canal was no doubt looked upon as a great enterprise, but it has since been dwarfed by other undertakings. The vessels that frequent the canal lock are necessarily of moderate capacity, and the canal itself as a means of conveyance has been superseded to a large extent by railways. But the promoters of this old auxiliary to Cardiff trade are deserving of remembrance, inasmuch as they were the first to assist the development of what is now the chief port in the Bristol Channel. Captain Smyth, R.N., writing in 1840, said: 'This port (Cardiff) was held to be in extreme activity half a century ago, when the comparatively scanty supply of iron was brought down from the hills in wagons, each bringing two tons, drawn by four horses, and attended by a man and a boy. Even Mr Bacon's contract guns in the American war were thus conveyed for embarkation to the side of *Gwlad Quay*. . . . Coals at the same time were brought chiefly from Caerphilly Mountain, in bags weighing from one hundred to one hundred and thirty pounds, on horses, mules, and asses, with a woman or lad driving two or three of them.'

Three years after the opening of the canal, the population of the town, which still occupied its old site near the Taff, was 1870. In 1839, the West Bute Dock, built at an immense outlay by the late Marquis of Bute, a great land and coal owner in the neighbourhood, was opened. This gave a great impetus to trade, the facilities of the port for coal shipments being very much increased by this sheet of water, which has an area of twenty and a half acres.

The railways that were now made played an important part in the development of the port, and very soon the docking accommodation already provided was rendered inadequate. It became necessary to build a new dock; and the completion in 1859 of the East Bute Dock, by the same noble proprietor, marks indeed an epoch in local history, a fact which will be at once understood when it is pointed out that whereas in 1851 the population was eighteen thousand, it had increased in 1861 to over thirty thousand. The area of the new dock was forty-five acres. In 1874 the total acreage of the Bute Docks had been brought up to seventy-seven and a half by the construction of the south basin. And now the port awaits the building by the present Marquis of Bute of another and a still larger dock.

The rapid growth of the port has called for the closest attention of the corporation to the general requirements of the town. Even in recent years, many central streets were narrow, and

partly blocked by ancient impediments. Improvements in these respects have been effected at great cost, and the town has undergone radical alteration. Several Improvement Acts have been obtained; but the most important was that which authorised the amalgamation in 1875 of Cardiff with its out-growths, Canton and Roath, and the expenditure of a very large sum of money in street-works. Whole blocks of houses have been pulled down, the Cardiff bridge has been widened, and other alterations of great utility brought about under the provisions of the Act. The inhabitants move with the times, and there is much public spirit in the amalgamated borough, which manifests itself in every direction, as the records of the daily press constantly show.

With regard to the shipping-trade, the position of Cardiff will perhaps be better understood when it is stated that the value of exports in 1880 was £4,161,778; and the imports, £2,338,133. In 1881, the coal exports amounted to 5,496,442 tons; iron exports to 124,591 tons; coke exports, 17,669 tons; patent fuel, 117,449 tons; coal coastwise, 933,500 tons. In 1885, 414,159 tons of coal were shipped coastwise, and 32,498 tons to foreign ports.

Cardiff may no longer be described simply as a Welsh town. The making of the docks was the means of attracting to it a large number of Irish labourers, who have permanently taken up their residence in the locality. English and Scotch capitalists help to swell the accessions, and many of the leading ship-owners and merchants are now of the 'north countree.' Yorkshire and Lancashire are well represented. But although the town is of a composite character, it must not be supposed that the Welsh element is eliminated. Far from it. There are many Welshmen who, individually, demonstrate considerable business capacity, and who conduct very large establishments in the town and at the docks.

About twenty years ago, it was stated in a local guide-book that 'the greater portion of the inhabitants are labourers and persons engaged in trade. A great many Irish have settled in the town, and herd together in the lanes and alleys, where abundance of filth is to be met with.' What we have already said shows that this description, as applied to the present state of the town and its inhabitants, would be misleading. As to the lanes and alleys, they are being gradually got rid of, or improved; and sanitary inspectors have assiduously looked after the dwellings where people have been suspected of 'herding' together. It is true there is yet need for improvement in some of the lower quarters of the town, but we are not aware that Cardiff is dirtier in this respect than some other large ports. But in this case, special allowance should perhaps be made for the rapidity with which the population has increased. As the shipping has outgrown dock accommodation, so has the demand for houses been greater than the supply. In the memorial of the Cardiff Corporation in favour of the establishment at Cardiff of the proposed University College for South Wales and Monmouthshire, it is mentioned that during the five years 1875-79, nearly one million pounds is believed to have been expended by speculative builders alone in the borough,

and it is a certain fact that Building Societies are doing an extensive business in the locality. During the six years ending August 31, 1881, one hundred and forty-five new streets had been constructed; three thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine new houses, and eleven places of worship, were built; new schools numbered twenty; shops, one hundred and sixty-one; other buildings, nine hundred and sixty-four; total new buildings, four thousand nine hundred and eighty-five. And yet there is scarcely an empty house to be met with, and many small tenements are occupied by two or more families.

The general aspect of the town is admirable. On all hands are to be seen business and residential premises of an elegant character. Churches and schools abound; and there is every indication of an earnest desire to provide as fully as possible for the moral and social necessities of the port. The town generally is not consolidated, in a topographical sense. Situated in the first place two miles from the sea, it has extended seawards. The docks prevented its direct extension to the south-east, and its northern suburbs have spread in an easterly and westerly direction, intervening spaces being occupied on the west by the river Taff, and in other parts by large spaces of land not available for building purposes.

Of the local landowners—chiefly the Marquis of Bute, Lord Windsor, Lord Tredegar, and Mrs Macintosh of Macintosh—it may be said that their policy is spirited; and their liberality has been evidenced in a number of important public gifts. Although Cardiff has grown so rapidly, it is felt that the town is yet in its infancy. With its rise and progress, the multiplication of collieries and iron-works—more especially the former—has been contemporaneous in the landward districts of the port; and as the supply of coal and iron is practically inexhaustible, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a great future is in store for the locality.

SOME TESTAMENTARY CURIOSITIES.

Of curious bequests, there would seem to be no end; indeed, any one bent upon making a complete collection of such singularities, has a hobby that will last a lifetime. For the newest specimen of eccentricity in this line we are beholden to Signor Pasquale Favelle, a well-to-do gentleman, 'late of Naples,' and still later of London, where his will was proved not very long since. By this document, the testator leaves three Italian municipalities four hundred and fifty pounds each, and the Corporation of London seven hundred and fifty pounds; the interest in each case to be given every year to three poor girls between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, by way of marriage portion, the claims of the candidates to be decided by lot, not by favour. The Corporations concerned may save Signor Favelle's executors any trouble regarding these matrimonial premiums; but they have a more unthankful task in deciding where to place a legacy of two hundred and forty pounds bequeathed 'to the Editor enjoying the

greatest reputation in any town of Europe; a legacy the selected one is likely emphatically to decline, since it is burdened with the obligation of printing and publishing the testator's French novel *Zuleite*, his four-act comedy *An English Election*, besides sundry poems, including one on the Final Judgment. Although a voluntary exile from his native land, and taking the last opportunity afforded him to proclaim that he died as he had lived, a hater of tyranny and corruption, the Signor had nothing in common with the Democracy, for it is to 'Her Imperial and Royal Majesty of India and of the United Kingdom of Great Britain,' that he bequeaths his most cherished production, a tragic opera entitled *Aleira*; trusting that Her Majesty will order it to be performed for the benefit of the poor of London.

We fear the Neapolitan's hope of achieving posthumous fame is as little likely to be fulfilled as that of Dr Borne, who has left all he possessed to the University of Lausanne; conditionally that the bequest be allowed to accumulate for a hundred years; at the end of which time it is to be expended in translating his *Maxims and Aphorisms* into every known language, and supplying every library in the world with a copy of that doubtless wonderful but utterly unknown literary masterpiece.

Senator Baker, of California, had a very bad opinion of married men. After expressing the hope that his mother had too much respect for his father's memory ever to marry again, he yet provides for that eventuality by directing the bequest he made her to be paid 'free and independent' of any husband she might take to herself. Fully alive to the difficulties attending the efforts of women to gain a livelihood, he left his sister Lulu sufficient to insure her the comforts of life 'beyond any peradventure;' and knowing the tyrannical and unmanly conduct of many husbands towards their wives, desired that what he left her should be her own absolutely. Fearing this proviso might not prove sufficiently protective, this provident brother added: 'Should my sister be at any time so unfortunate as to have a husband addicted to gambling, intoxicating liquors, or other vices, or be of lazy or spendthrift habits; then I direct that my executors, or the Court having control of my estate, shall personally or directly expend such money in paying the living expenses of my said sister Lulu, and the maintenance and education of any children she may have. I trust that no such necessity will arise; but unforeseen calamities overtake the best of wives who are so unfortunate as to be wedded to depraved and unmanly men, who forget their vows and their duty, becoming monsters and brutes, when they should be companions and protectors.'

The Californian displayed anxiety to protect his womankind from the wickedness of his own sex. A Maine farmer, a man after Sir Wilfrid Lawson's own heart, sought rather to protect his legatees from themselves. By the terms of his will, he decreed that such of his sons, grandchildren, 'born or yet unborn,' or great-grandchildren, who should be detected smoking or chewing tobacco, or drinking ardent spirits or alcohol, unless prescribed by a physician under oath, should, as he phrased it, 'be cut off from

their dower in my property for six months for the first offence, and one year for each subsequent offence; and for one year of total abstinence, his or their dowers to be restored.' By a codicil, the limitations and conditions regarding tobacco and alcohol were extended to 'gambling in the ordinary sense of the term, or betting money or other valuable consideration.'

Without going to any such length, a German named Bechtel provided against those coming after him indulging in his pet aversion, by excluding any of his male descendants from sharing in his estate so long as they persisted in wearing a moustache. Not such a reasonable provision as that made by a Mr Stokes, whereby any person named as a beneficiary under his will lost all claim upon his estate if he or she raised any contention respecting it in a court of law.

If testators can do pretty much as they please in disposing of their property, they have no such power as to the disposition of their remains. Dr Crittenden, a London physician, directed that within three days after his death, his body should be handed over to his dear friend Eliza Williams, to be dealt with in such a manner as he had set down in an authoritative letter to the said Eliza Williams; any expenses incurred by her in carrying out his instructions to be paid by his executors within three months after his decease. In the letter to his lady-friend, the Doctor expressed his desire that his body should be burned 'when dead,' by being placed over and surrounded by fagots of wood; the calcined bones and fragments to be collected together, and placed in a Wedgwood vase, which he had already given into her keeping; or if that were not large enough, in a vase, metallic or otherwise, but, as she was aware, he had a preference for earthenware.

Taking no heed of the Doctor's instructions, his executors buried him in Brompton Cemetery. Three months afterwards, the lady petitioned the Home Secretary for a license to exhume the body for cremation, or, if that could not legally be done, for burial in another place. Sir R. Cross refused to grant a license for the purpose of cremating the body, but gave permission for its removal to a churchyard in Wales. Having got possession of the body, Miss (or Mrs?) Williams conveyed it to Italy, where she had no difficulty in fulfilling her friend's cremation instructions. Her conscience satisfied in this respect, she sued the executors for her expenses. The Court, however, pronounced that a man could not dispose of his dead body by will, the executors being responsible for its proper burial; besides which, the body had been obtained by illegal and false representations; and the action was dismissed with costs.

In 1877, a man who died in Berlin, leaving behind him a fortune of thirty-four thousand marks, surprised all who knew him by devising that thirty-two thousand marks should go to the authorities of his native place, and that the remainder should be divided between nine relatives and a friend with whom he had quarrelled, the share of any one of the legatees becoming forfeited if he followed the testator to the grave. His relatives religiously obeyed the dead man's decree; but the estranged friend,

remembering old times, could not refrain from going quietly to the churchyard and paying his last respects to the deceased. By-and-by, a codicil came to light directing that if any one of the ten legatees under the will should disobey the injunction regarding the last ceremony, he was to receive the bulk of the money left to the testator's town; and thanks to the shrewd device, the man who thought more of his old friendship than his old friend's money, found himself comfortably provided for, for the rest of his life.

A strange freak was played by a citizen of Brooklyn who died and left seventy-one pair of trousers. In accordance with his will, these were sold by public auction, for the benefit of the poor of the parish, no purchaser of one pair being permitted to bid for another. This odd stipulation excited no suspicion at the sale; but some days afterwards, one of the buyers, on making a close examination of his purchase, came upon a small canvas bag sewn in the waist-band; on opening which he discovered therein ten hundred-dollar notes. He spread the news of his find abroad, and set the remaining seventy trouser-buyers inquiring into things, the result being that each one of them found himself richer than he had been by a thousand dollars; as welcome a windfall as came to the widow of a miserly Rhode Island livery-stable keeper, who left her two hundred thousand dollars, after separating from her for indulging in the luxury of a silk dress.

Captain Hartmann, a retired officer, well known in Jamaica, and noted for his fondness for animals, was as brave a fellow as here and there one meets; but while he did not fear death, he was possessed with a great dread of being buried alive, and made sure of escaping premature interment, by ordering his body to be kept in an open coffin till the last moment possible, when his head was to be cut off by a surgeon, who was to be paid ten pounds for performing the operation. That he considered life itself a great blessing, was further shown by his appointing a person to look after his dogs, cats, and birds, and see they wanted for nothing; while for the many horses, mules, and asses calling him master, they were to be released from labour for evermore, and made free of his acres of grazing-ground as long as they lived. When the last of these animal legatees dies, and not until then, the estate is to be realised, and the proceeds handed over to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

It will be some years before the Society enjoys the handsome bequest; but its patience is not likely to be as sorely tried as that of the heir of an old Canadian farmer who is bound to work the farm for his stepmother's advantage as long as she lives, and then commence paying the rent to the family—fifty dollars a year—until three thousand dollars have been so distributed amongst them, when the farm will become his own. He is now thirty years of age; his stepmother is a woman in the prime of life, and reckoned good for another forty years. After her death, it will take him sixty years to pay off the encumbrances on the farm, so that he may cheerfully calculate upon being its sole possessor when he has attained the patriarchal age of a hundred and thirty. So may it be!

THE LABOURER'S WIFE.

SHE took her trouble in her heart, and went,
One spring-tide Sabbath evening, from her door,
Shadowed by chestnut leaves in drooping folds,
Not spreading yet broad welcome to the sun;
And through the meadows, and the hawthorn lanes,
Whose fragrance yet was closed within the bud,
To the wide fields, rich with up-springing corn.
Beneath the hedges, thickly tangled, spread
Vivid spring verdure. In the budding copse,
Hedged by thick sloe-blossoms falling white like snow,
Ere the black stems were gemmed with emerald leaf,
The birds sang out their welcome to the spring.
The dappled greensward, with pale primrose tufts
Of gold enamelled, and the wind-flower's pearl,
Lured her aside a moment, and she stood
Beneath a budding oak, and heard the burst
Of rich bird-music, carolled loud to God,
The God who cares for sparrows, and who hears
The ravens when they call. She list'ning stood.

Not one of all the gracious influences
Of peaceful Nature given by God to soothe,
Could His child recognise, or knowingly
Receive into her heart. No poetry
Within her sad and labour-hardened soul
Welled up, as though a stone were rolled away,
In tender presence of the Beautiful.
She seeing, saw not; yet she was not dulled
By God-sent trouble, but by many years
Of this world's work, and this world's prose, until
The prose had eaten into her like rust.
Still, soothed unknowingly by glory of spring,
She took her trouble with her, and went on
Through one field more, where cowslips stood in groups
Like fairies routed, flocked together in fear,
And shining grass swayed in the evening air,
That gave soft breathing to the tremulous lark;
And reached the village, and the lowly door
Of the small village chapel. Entering in,
She heard the songs of Zion; and the heart
Of the poor drudging woman rose with these,
Winging its way to courts celestial, raised
In praise with angels, who for ever praise
And cast their golden crowns (as seemed to her)
Before the Throne, and wave wide golden wings,
And love the Lord, and love His labouring poor,
Although their own white robes shine like the sun.
They, following His command, through His dear cross,
Shall welcome yet to seats already named,
And known by them, the weary of the earth.
Ye songs of Zion, rise up higher, higher!
O trembling voice, O calm and trustful heart,
The Lord is with thee! sends His poetry,
Not through the door of Culture, but of Faith!
To Him sing praises, for He giveth light—
And that not only light to see to work,
But light to beautify: and freely gives!

The service over, and her trouble less
(God helping her to bear it), she arose,
And going from the chapel, saw rose-stains
Of glory from the setting sun, fall fair
On the rough whitewashed wall, poured through the panes
Of lattice windows flashing gems and gold;
And seeing, saw not knowingly, but saw
Instead of God's great sunset, pearly gates
Of heaven, and His heaven's golden floor;
Saw no material sun, yet saw that Sun
Which never setteth, the blest Sun which bears,
For each and all, kind healing in His wings.

C. C.

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THE WORK OF RIVERS.

THERE is no series of actions occurring in the physical world around us of greater importance in the eyes of the geologist than the work of rivers. The high value which science is led to place upon the action of running-water as a geological agent, is by no means difficult to understand. We require firstly to bear in mind that the geologist endeavours to explain the past history of the earth by an appeal to its existing condition. The present of the earth is, in his view, the key to its past. This is the underlying principle of every detail of modern geology; and it is this method of explaining the past by an appeal to the existing circumstances of the earth, that constitutes what is known in geology as 'uniformity.' The geologist thus assumes that the actions and operations of Nature have been of uniform character, and that when differences have existed between the earth's past and its present, they can be proved to be differences, not of kind, but merely of degree. Thus he maintains, and with every show of reason, that rivers have always acted in the past as they act now; that rain and the sea have worn and wasted the land in the æons of long ago, as they wear and waste it still; and that volcanic eruptions, earthquake-action, and the rise and sinking of land, have served to modify the earth's surface in the past, as they are certainly seen to alter the contour of the land to-day.

In the work of modifying the earth, rivers have always held a prominent place. The early geologists invariably assumed that rivers were powerful agents in producing change, although they did not credit them with their full power as disclosed by modern research. Even Job speaks of the 'waters wearing the stones,' and of the 'mountain being moved out of his place;' and the observation shows us that in patriarchal days, the power of running-water to 'erode,' or to eat out and wear away the earth's crust, was a recognised feature of physical history. But it has certainly been left for the modern

geologist to show the full capabilities of rivers to effect changes upon the earth's surface; and to note the part they play in that well-nigh universal action, named 'denudation.' This action, as the etymology of the word indicates, is one of 'laying bare' the surfaces of the earth. But it is likewise something more. The 'laying bare' of rock-surfaces is only the prelude to them being wasted and worn, and to their being carried off, slowly or the reverse, to the sea and to lakes, there to form the rocks and foundations of the future.

In this work of denudation, there are employed a large number of natural agencies, which act ceaselessly upon the world's substance. There is hardly a feature of the land—hill, valley, river-course, basin, cliff—which does not represent either the direct or indirect result of the process of denudation. In this work of 'wear and tear,' the sea, of course, plays an important part. The ceaseless action of the waves affects the coasts, occasionally in an alarming fashion, by sweeping away large tracts of valuable land. The atmosphere also is ever at work, denuding the land by the action of the oxygen and carbonic acid gas which it contains; whilst ice, frost, and snow exercise a powerful effect upon the earth, whether in loosening the soils by the action of frost, or in the shape of the glacier, slowly cutting and carving its way from the mountain-tops to the valley below.

To rivers, however, must be ascribed the chief part in this action of 'denudation,' which it must be borne in mind is hardly a phase of pure 'waste,' inasmuch as the matter worn away from the land is being re-formed into rocks in the quietude of the lake-beds and in the abysses of ocean. Geologists have made elaborate calculations of the amount of waste matter which various rivers wear and bring down from the lands through which they flow, to the sea which receives them. It is obvious that the power of any river, however, will depend upon a variety and combination of circumstances; and it is needful to take these into account in estimating

the river's work. For example, the river that has to operate upon soft material will naturally possess a more evident effect on the district through which it runs, than that which flows over a rocky course. And similarly, the river which has a steep and precipitous course, interspersed with waterfalls, must act more powerfully on the land than the winding and slow-flowing river, whose meanderings are in fact due to the lack of force to sweep obstacles away.

On the basis afforded by such considerations, calculations of a river's work may be made with some degree of certainty. Thus it has been estimated that the Mississippi reduces the level of the country through which it flows at the rate of one foot in six thousand years. Supposing that this rate of wear and tear could be made to extend over the whole surface of North America, the average height of which is seven hundred and forty-eight feet, the continent would be reduced to the level of the sea in four and a half millions of years. This latter period, which seems, humanly speaking, of well-nigh inconceivable duration, is, in geological eyes, a mere fraction of the estimated total duration of the earth itself. Various rivers are found to wear the land at a greater rate than others, according to the circumstances detailed above. In the case of the Po of Europe, for example, the wear and tear are nine times as great as in the case of the Danube; and in the Mississippi, the rate is only one-third of that exercised by the seething and tumultuous Rhone. The latter river, according to the best calculations, removes one foot of rock in one thousand five hundred and twenty-eight years; the same work being accomplished by the Ganges in two thousand three hundred and fifty-eight years; by the Po in seven hundred and twenty-nine years; by the Danube in six thousand eight hundred and forty-six years; and by the Nile in four thousand seven hundred and twenty-three years. At the above rate, the Ganges would remove the Asiatic continent in five millions of years; assuming the average height of the continent above sea-level to be two thousand two hundred and sixty-four feet. Similarly, Europe would be worn down by the Po to the water-level in less than a million of years, provided the whole continent were denuded as rapidly as the Po-valley is worn to-day.

Some highly interesting statistics have been given regarding the amount of water and of sediment of all kinds which various rivers bring down to the sea. In the Tay of Scotland, for instance, it is assumed that the area of drainage is two thousand five hundred square miles; the annual discharge of water being one hundred and forty-four billions of cubic feet; and the sediment amounting to nearly fifty millions of cubic feet per year. The Clyde is credited with bringing down nearly nine millions of cubic feet of sediment per annum; whilst the Forth, with a drainage area of four hundred and fifty square miles, is estimated to carry to the sea nearly five and a half millions of cubic feet. Our own British Islands are estimated to possess an average height above the sea of six hundred and fifty feet; and it has been calculated that as things are, our rivers will have worn our territory down to sea-level in about five and a quarter millions of

years. Sir Charles Lyell calculated that the amount of matter brought down by the Ganges in one year would 'raise a surface of two hundred and twenty-eight and a half square miles, or a square space, each side of which should measure fifteen miles, a height of one foot.' Another estimate gives the work of the Ganges as equal to the collection of an amount of matter which would exceed in weight and bulk forty-two of the great Pyramids of Egypt. To transport a mass of solid matter from the higher country of the Ganges to the sea, equal to that brought down by the river in the four months of the wet season, would require a fleet of over eighty ships, each carrying fourteen hundred tons; the whole fleet sailing 'down the river every hour of every day and night for four months continuously.' These calculations, based on data which cannot be questioned, serve to show the rapid rate at which the earth's surface is being worn down by the rivers of the world. And the action loses nothing of its significance when we reflect that the action of the merest brook does not differ in kind from that of the largest river. For brook and river alike run seawards or lakewards; each laden with matter from the land, and each in its own way serving to alter, modify, and reduce the land-surfaces to which it serves as a drain.

The influence of waterfalls, as serving to aid the wearing action of the river through the increased velocity of the water, has already been alluded to. The most notable example of the effects of running-water when associated with cascades, is found in the celebrated Falls of Niagara. These consist, as most readers know, of two cascades, having a small island (Goat Island) intervening, and presenting a total breadth of nine hundred and fifty yards. The height of the Falls is one hundred and forty and one hundred and sixty feet respectively. About six hundred and seventy thousand tons of water are shot over the verge of Niagara every minute. The river itself flows over a comparatively flat table-land, in the course of which Lake Erie forms a well-marked basin. Near the Falls, it rushes over an uneven and rocky bed of limestone, and exhibits a striking difference from its comparatively quiet and even upper course. Now it is a matter of common observation that every waterfall tends to cut its way backwards or towards the source of the river; and an examination of the Niagara Falls shows that the water after leaving the Falls passes through a comparatively narrow limestone gorge, extending to Queenstown, where this limestone overlooks a plain. Sir Charles Lyell calculated that Niagara wears away the limestone cliff over which it falls at the rate of one foot yearly; hence, as Queenstown lies some thirty-five thousand feet down the river, it may be assumed that it has taken that number of years for the Falls to cut their way backwards from their original position at Queenstown to their present site. Evidence is not wanting to show traces of river-action at a height of nearly three hundred feet above the present ravine in which the Niagara flows. Hence Sir Charles Lyell concluded that the river once ran between the present Falls and Queenstown at a height of some three hundred feet above its present level—that is, before the gorge was

excavated, and at a time when the Falls were situated at the latter place.

One of the most remarkable examples of river-action, both as regards the extent of the water's work and its uniformity, is found in the Rio Colorado of the Western American States. This area has been thoroughly and scientifically explored by the Survey of the United States Government, and the results of the examination testify anew to the power of running-water as an agent in modifying the earth's crust. In part of its course the Rio Colorado runs through rocky ravines of immense extent named 'cañons.' The Grand Cañon of the Colorado is in itself a magnificent spectacle. It is a chasm two hundred and seventeen miles in length, and with an average depth of one mile, or five thousand two hundred feet. This cañon cut through rocks, is only one amongst many through which the river finds its way, and at the bottom of which it appears to the observer above as a mere silver streak. What, let us ask, would have been the opinion of the geologists of former years, had the query been put to them concerning the means whereby these great gorges have been excavated? The answer would have borne that the river merely occupied the gorges which had been formed for it by some eruptive force. But an examination of the cañons shows this opinion to be untenable in the face of facts. Everywhere there are to be seen traces of the river-action on the sides of the cañons; at all points, the geologist is met by evidences of the plain fact that the river has actually eroded and worn out the gorges it has come to occupy.

Are there any circumstances in connection with the Rio Colorado River, it might be asked, which serve to explain the powerful nature of its action on the rocks? The answer to this question is of the most interesting kind, since it serves to illustrate a new circumstance in river-action, and one which renders it highly powerful in its effects on the earth's surface. The Colorado is undoubtedly a fierce torrent. Within the cañons it has a fall or slope of between seven and eight feet per mile, which is twenty times as great as that of the Ohio and Mississippi. But running-water alone will hardly accomplish a work of such magnitude as the Colorado has evidently been able to effect. Hence, when the geologist surveys the Colorado more closely, he notes that its work and power are largely due to the quantity of sand and like debris it carries down, and which borne along with its currents, serve like a natural saw or file, to wear and eat out the rocks over which it runs. The immense power of sand borne by running-water, as an agent in eroding rocks, is thus clearly demonstrated. But the sand must be present in proper quantity, that its work may be thoroughly accomplished. There must neither be too much nor too little sand in the river, if its work is to be thoroughly performed. Too much sand will block up its currents and impede its work, will lie in its bed, and will thus protect the rocks, instead of contributing to their wear. Too little sand will be swept onwards and leave no impression on the river-course. Hence, it is when the river, as is the case with the Colorado, possesses just that modicum of sand which it can keep moving with dire effect to the rocks, that the wear and tear proceed most quickly, and

that the work of water is seen at its best. Curiously enough, a tributary of the Colorado illustrates the case of a river which cannot erode its course because of the great amount of sand which it carries. This is the river Platte, which has a fall equal to that of the Colorado, but which is *overloaded* with sand. Hence its action on its course is feeble as compared with that of the Colorado, and its work can never, as things are, compare with that of its neighbour-stream, which has silently but effectually hewn out the land into the great gorges, which are amongst the most wonderful of Nature's gigantic works.

It is evident that rivers, entering lakes and seas, will deposit therein the debris and waste derived from the land. As has already been shown, this waste matter will be deposited as sediment, to form the rocks of the future; but when it is placed in lakes or in shallow waters anywhere, its effects are seen in the 'silt' or filling-up of lakes, and in the formation by rivers of tongues of land, which may jut out to sea for long distances. We know, for example, that the Rhone has formed new land in the Lake of Geneva, at the river-estuary, by the deposition of solid matter in the lake. An old town, called Port Vallais, which about eight hundred years ago was situated close by the borders of the lake, is now placed a mile and a half inland, through the river-deposits having come to intervene between it and the lake. So also the Italian Adria, which in the time of Augustus was a seaport—giving, in fact, the name to the Adriatic Sea—is now, says Lyell, 'about twenty Italian miles inland. Ravenna was also a seaport, and is now about four miles from the main sea.' But by far the most interesting case of the formation of river-land is that of the Mississippi. If we look at a map of North America, we shall be able to see the 'delta' of the Mississippi stretching seawards into the Gulf of Mexico, as a long tongue of land through which flows the river, and which allows the river to pass to the sea by three chief mouths. The South-west Pass is the broadest and deepest mouth; Pass à L'ouest points eastwards; and in the middle is the South Pass. This river brings down debris in a year sufficient to build a mass one mile square, and two hundred and sixty-eight feet thick. Each 'pass' has a 'bar' at its mouth, and the obstruction to traffic which once existed may be conceived, when it is mentioned that in 1859 fifty-five vessels were blocked at the South-west Pass, the freight of those bound outwards being seven million three hundred and sixty-seven thousand three hundred and thirty-nine pounds; whilst several had been waiting for weeks in the hope of getting to sea. It was little to be wondered at that the commerce of New Orleans was found to be seriously impeded by the state of matters at the mouth of the Mississippi. The advance of the tongue of land it may be mentioned takes place at the rate of about a hundred feet per annum at the South Pass; whereas at the South-west Pass, which latter is the chief entrance to the river, the river-sediment gains at the rate of three hundred feet yearly.

The problem how to keep one or more of the 'passes' open for traffic, so as to allow vessels to enter or leave the river at all states of the tide, has been solved by the ingenuity and enterprise of an American citizen, Captain James B. Eads,

whose name deserves to be handed down to posterity as a true benefactor of his own and other lands. Seizing upon the idea that the river keeps its own course clear so long as the rush of water, confined between banks, is great, Captain Eads resolved to simply extend the banks of the South Pass, so as to secure the requisite flow and force of water. After much opposition, Eads at length obtained government consent and permission in 1875 to carry out his scheme. He thereupon constructed a series of 'jetties' or extensions of the river-banks of the South Pass, by means of willow-frames, which were duly sunk in the river, and which the river itself filled and coated with sediment, thus rendering the whole structure solid. The work was completed on July 9, 1879, with the result that a new channel thirty feet deep, seven hundred feet wide at its surface, and two hundred feet wide at bottom, had been constructed. This channel is kept clear by the 'scour' of the river itself; the Mississippi has thus been rendered navigable at all states of the tide, and a great commercial success has been attained through a persevering study of the conditions wherewith Nature secures her own ends in the matter of river-action.

The study of rivers is thus seen to be fraught with instruction and interest, not only for the general reader, but for the student of the earth's structure and history. Many an interesting chapter in the world's history can be written by aid of the geological information supplied by the river and its work; and there can be no better introduction to geological science itself than a study of river-action, as a preliminary to the understanding of some of the changes which this world of ours is ever undergoing.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXV.—'COMES OVER HERE TO SEE CON, AND FINDS HIMSELF TOO LATE.'

CONSTANCE did not appear at the breakfast-table next morning; and Miss Lucretia, in answer to inquiries, shook her curls with a world of young-lady-like emphasis at Gerard, and declared that the poor darling was quite worn out by excitement, had passed a broken night, and was now happily asleep. Gerard was sheepishly discomfited by this intelligence, since he, in Miss Lucretia's eyes, was the evident source of mischief. The old lady sat but a little time at breakfast, and withdrew to keep watch and ward over the sleeper. To her surprise, the young lady was seated in her peignoir at a table, writing. She huddled away the paper guiltily on her aunt's entrance, and locked it in a writing-desk.

'You silly child,' said Aunt Lucretia with mild severity, 'you will spoil him if you write to him every half-hour when you cannot see him. Go to bed. You are quite flushed. You have had a bad night, and you must sleep. I shall bring my work here, and sit beside you until you do it. And I shall keep guard over you until you are fit to get up again.'

The lovely defaulter made no answer to this

rebuke, but crept into bed submissively, and after a time, feigned sleep. She was glad that her aunt suspected nothing. The note had not been intended for the accepted lover, but for Val Strange. To be compelled to stillness, to lie unbound, yet fettered by the eye of affectionate watchfulness, whilst the storm of feeling heaves the soul, and the soul strives to stir the body as the wind heaves the sea, to suffer the torments of anxiety, of remorse, of despised or unfruitful love, and yet to feign sleep and make no sign, is an agony added to an agony.

Miss Lucretia stuck to her post gallantly, and embroidered and watched with much combined industry and vigilance. She was of course without an idea of the restraint her presence inflicted, and in her kindly heart regarded herself as an unmixed blessing. Val in the meantime was settling down into the waters of despondency; but before absolutely surrendering himself for lost, he determined to make one more essay. So he wrote again; and this time, fearing and almost hoping that the last note might have miscarried, he gave the bearer definite instructions.

'You are sure you know Miss Jolly's maid, Richards?'

'Yes, sir,' said Richards. He was a romantic middle-aged person, a little given to drink in lonely hours, and much addicted to the perusal of imaginative literature of a certain type. He had been known to weep above his whisky-and-water and the woes of Lady Ella, in that tender romance 'Her Golden Hair,' in the *Boudoir Journal*; and he was beginning in his ridiculous old head to make romances for his employer, and was interested in the intrigue. 'I seen the young person once before at Miss Jolly's in town—the helder Miss Jolly, sir.'

'Very well,' returned his master. 'Take that note, and give it to the maid. Ask her to give it to Miss Jolly when she is alone—not the elder Miss Jolly, mind.'

'Certainly not, sir,' said the observant Richards. Val, who found the clandestine business oppressive, could almost have kicked the body-servant for his ready appreciation of the condition of affairs. Don Giovanni seems to have had no compunctions about taking Leporello into consultation; and all Vanbrugh's dashing young gentlemen are at home in the confidence of their valets; but Val was a gentleman of nicer notions, and found no pleasure in imparting the secrets of his soul to Mr Richards. He glared angrily, therefore, at that sympathetic menial, and briefly bidding him do as he was told, turned his back upon him. It is an old-world story that when the master marries the mistress, the man weds the maid, and Mr Richards had lived until his time had come. Miss Lucretia's maid, now devoted chiefly to Constance's service, was a bright little brunette, with a pretty figure and a neat foot, a peachy cheek and sparkling eyes; and she wore that modest and becoming dress of female servitude which ladies might copy with advantage to their looks. If the thick-set hazel were dying from Richards's topmost head, and the hateful crow had already trodden the corners of his eyes, he had still a heart, and he was still a bachelor. He had saved a little money. He knew of a public-house, a really respectable concern, in

which, as landlord, it might be pleasant to settle down to the *otium cum dignitate*. The respectable concern would want a landlady to brighten it; and why—cried Richards's heart aloud within him—should this charming little creature not be rescued from the restraints of a servant's life? So Richards, bent on his master's prosperity, did also a little love-making on his own account. In short, like a good servant, he identified himself with his master's cause. But inexorable Fate makes no allowance for good intentions if you steer your barque on the rocks, and the valet's shipwreck involved the master's. Of all delusive coquettes, Fortune is the most delusive and the most coquettish, and she must needs at once throw little Selina in the way of romantic Richards. Now, it stood to reason that if Richards at once intrusted his master's note to the maiden's care, he would have less chance of prosecuting his own suit than if he delayed the delivery a little while.

'Good-morning, miss,' said Richards.

'Good-morning,' replied Selina; and since Richards occupied the greater part of the way, she stood still. Richards, like other people, began to find the art of conversation more difficult than he had fancied it. But it seemed altogether safe and polite to say that it was beautiful weather for the time of year. Selina agreed to that proposition amiably enough, but evinced a discouraging desire to get by and go about her business.

'You haven't been long in Paris, have you?' asked the middle-aged valet.

'Longer than you have, if it's the school of politeness they say it is,' answered the maid.

'You needn't take up the rôle of the corridor.'

'I shouldn't ha' stopped you, my dear,' pleaded Mr Richards, 'only I'd got something important to say.'

'Well, say it then,' responded the damsel pertly. 'My dear, indeed!'

In oratory, the best of all rules is to have something important to say, and to say it. But Richards was not an orator, and the appeal took him somewhat at a disadvantage. 'Very good orators, when they are out, will spit,' said Rosalind; 'but for lovers, lacking matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.' Mr Richards had never studied Shakspeare; but he followed his recipe, or strove to follow it. But as, with the slow grace of middle age, he essayed to circle the limp and taper form before him—with insinuating air, bent downwards, and had almost won his purpose, swift and sudden, the damsel slapped his face, first on one side and then on the other, and bounding past him, rapidly traversed the corridor and disappeared. The discomfited Richards prowled about in vain for a second sight of the scornful beauty. Little Selina might have resented his advances in any case; but it is within the narrator's knowledge that a gentleman out of livery, who resided, when his master was in town, in Chesterfield Street, had saved a little money, and knew a public-house, and was of opinion that Selina would make a capital landlady. The Chesterfield Street gentleman had breathed his moving story in the maiden's ear. Selina was 'engaged.'

So Val's second note miscarried; and Richards, being interrogated, made false declaration con-

cerning it, and said it was delivered; hoping, like others who have failed, to make failure good before he could be detected. All that day, the wretched valet pervaded the corridor, with the note lying on his conscience like a weight, and once meeting Selina, implored her to stay but for a moment. But she, with head in air, went by; and he, like the parent in Mr Campbell's poem, 'was left lamenting.' Then the miserable man, being a person of no resources, burned Val's letter, and wrote by that evening's post in application for a vacant 'place,' and so prepared to escape the day of reckoning. He was the readier to do this that he was a bad sailor, and had been compelled to live at sea so much of late, that the possession of a stomach had become a burden to him.

No response to Val's second appeal. She scorned him, then? Had he not deserved to be scorned? She had told him that she did not care for him; and he, in his vanity, had believed, in spite of her protestations, that she 'loved him. Well—he was rightly served. So the cold fit followed the hot, and in due time again the hot fit followed the cold. He had been so desirous of escaping Gerard hitherto, that he had remained almost a prisoner; but now, growing reckless, he wandered uneasily about the building, and suddenly encountered Reginald. He professed great preoccupation of manner, hoping to go by unnoticed; but being hailed, he turned, and with well-acted surprise, cried: 'Hillo! What brings you in Paris?'

'Oh, we're all here,' returned Reginald, linking his arm in Val's. 'I heard from Lumby that you had come back again. What an extraordinary chance by which you found those papers, wasn't it?'

'Yes, it was curious,' said Val, striving after a casual air—'very curious.—And so you're all here, are you? How's the governor?'

'Oh, as usual,' said the little man, with unfilial carelessness.

'And your sister?'

'Pretty well,' was the answer. Reginald made no account of female headaches.

'You spoke of Gerard just now,' said Val. 'Is he here?'

'Of course,' the little man responded—'of course. Directly you gave him the papers, he came racing over here. When that fellow Garling bolted and the smash came, the first thing Gerard did was to go to Constance and tell her about it, leaving her to cry-off. She has been a good deal cut up, and of course they've made it up again.—Seen Chaumont in *Toto-chez-Tata*?—No! It's the best thing here.' Reginald, like the rest, had been misled by his sister. He had indeed had some clue to the maze in which she walked, but he had lost it. Her second acceptance of Gerard was unforced and spontaneous, and he supposed she was pleasing herself, and that Valentine Strange had been vain enough to deceive himself. But though he could not understand his sister, the little man was keen enough to make out his companion's condition. 'Will you come to see Chaumont to-night?' he asked.

'No,' said Val hurriedly; 'I am engaged. I must be off at once. How long do you stay here?'

'We leave to-morrow morning,' said Reginald.

'We should have gone back to-day, but for Gerard's coming.'

'Remember me to all of them,' said Val lightly. 'I must be off. Good-bye, old man. I shall see you in town shortly, I daresay.' He shook hands with nervous haste, and ran rapidly downstairs. The little man, drumming with his fingers on the top of his hat, looked after him thoughtfully.

'Didn't want to see me,' he mused. 'Walking languidly and apparently without a purpose, when I met him, and in a dreadful hurry now. M-m-m. Hasn't got over it yet. Comes over here to see Con, and finds himself too late. I'm very sorry for him, poor beggar; but if over I am taken like that, if ever I fall in love, I'll try to hide the symptoms; and if the young woman doesn't want me, I'll try my hardest not to want the young woman.'

Val's persistence in a cause so evidently lost seemed a little disgraceful and unmanly, and even to Val himself it wore that complexion at times. The matter appeared to be growing hopeless enough now, and it seemed that Constance had resolved to hold no communication with him. If she were so resolved, Val was not yet so far gone that he could not see his way to the final cure of love. It was his belief that she had cared for him, which had so dangerously drawn him on all along; and he felt now that if he could but convince himself that he had been mistaken, he could go away and take his punishment like a man. But if he could, he would have a last glimpse of her before going for ever into the desert. So he went to see *Toto-chex-Tata*, and sitting in a dusky corner of the house, he watched for Constance. Had he looked to the stage and listened, he might have found a reason for her absence; but anyhow she did not come, and the fascinating Chaumont tripped and smiled and warbled, and Val heard nothing and saw nothing but misery and stupidity. Paris laughed and applauded. Val for once thought the Parisian judgment nothing worth. Reginald was there alone, with no eyes for anything but the stage, and Strange got away unnoticed. He saw Mr Jolly and his party leave the hotel next morning, and himself unseen, watched Gerard and Constance as they drove away. In the evening, he disconsolately followed, and arriving in London, learned that they had all gone down to the Grange. Well, he would go to Brierham, and there might meet with her. Let him only learn that she was happy, and he would be content. The unsophisticated credulity of the human conscience is a thing to wonder at. All life long a man may lie to it, and it will believe him in spite of countless detections. Val's new fraud was harmless and natural enough. So much may be admitted.

In the course of their journey to London, Gerard and Reginald had a talk which resulted in a movement important to this story.

'Do you remember the first night we met?' asked Gerard.

'Yes,' said Reginald. 'It was at Val Strange's. He half sighed "Poor Val" under his breath; but Gerard, who had ears like a fox, overheard the exclamation.'

'Why poor Val?' asked unsuspecting Gerard. 'What's the matter with him?'

'That's his secret,' said the little man—'not

mine. I don't think he's happy.—I didn't mean to interrupt you. What about the first time we met?'

'Do you remember a visitor that evening?'

'No.—Ah, yes. The Yankee fellow, who threw back Val's money, because Val supposed that he might have peeped into your letter.'

'That's the man,' said Gerard. 'Do you know, I shrewdly suspect that Yankee to be one of the finest fellows alive?' And Gerard, with much enthusiasm and some humour, told the story of Hiram's clandestine benefactions. With the honest fervour natural to youth, Reginald declared that Hiram was a brick, and protested loudly that something should be done to reward gratitude.

'I don't think it's a common virtue,' said Reginald; 'and where you find it, I think the soil is likely to be generally good.' And indeed there are few of the virtues which are less inclined to be solitary. The two agreed to take advantage of their passage through London to call upon Hiram. They had but a few hours to spare; but not being hindered by other business, they drove Strandwards, and alighted at the restaurant. When they entered, Hiram was deftly distributing a pile of plates before a tableful of hungry guests. He recognised Gerard at once, and bowed to him with the waiter's gesture of welcome, and having disposed of the hungry tableful, hurried to the new arrivals.

'Good-day, sir,' he said to Gerard.—'Good-day to you also, mister. I had the pleasure of seeing you, sir, I remember, when Mr Lumby sent me on a message to Valentine Strange, Esquire. You was in the billiard-room in that gentleman's mansion.—What shall I have the pleasure of bringin' you, gentlemen?' They had not eaten a meal since leaving Paris, ten hours before, and they were each ready for a beefsteak. Hiram bustled about and brought up the steaks in prime order, tender and juicy, flanked by floury potatoes, crisp little loaves, and the foaming tankard.

'And now,' said Gerard, 'when you can spare a moment, I want to speak to you.' In a little while, Hiram found a lull in the demand for edibles and potables, and presented himself before the friends. 'What sort of a berth have you here?'

'Wall, sir,' returned Hiram, with the tone of a man who declines to commit himself, 'it's the bridge that's kerryin' me over a strip of time's tide, and I haven't got anything to say agen it.'

'Nor much for it, eh?' said Reginald.

'Yes, sir,' returned Hiram; 'lots for it. But it ain't the sort of theme to stimulate eloquence; and that's a fact. It's greasier than I like, for one thing.'

'Would you care to change it?' asked Gerard.

'Well, mister,' responded the cautious Hiram, 'that depends. I don't want to leap out o' the fryin'-pan into the streets.'

'Would you like to take service?'

'And go about in a pea-green vest and have my head floured?' inquired Hiram with decision.

'No, sir; I should not.' He looked a little offended at the suggestion.

'No; thank you,' said Gerard; 'I don't want a flunkey. If I offer you a post, I shall not ask you to have your head floured. But I want a smart faithful man, whom I can trust; a handy

fellow, who has no objection to travel, and who won't object to do what he's asked to do.'

'Well, sir,' returned Hiram, 'if you're shootin' my way, it's a bull's-eye. I'm all that. But what should I be asked to do?'

'I want a man to attend me personally, to travel with me when I travel, and to act generally as a sort of combination of valet and confidential man. I shall offer you a liberal salary; and if you treat me well, I shall treat you well.'

'Very good,' said Hiram. 'I'm engaged. But if you don't mind, I'll make a stipulation—two stipulations. Number one: If I don't like the berth when I've tried it, I'm not to be regarded as ongrateful if I throw it up.'

'Certainly not,' interjected Gerard.

'And number two,' continued Hiram: 'That my own private proceedin's air not curtailed, so long as they don't interfere with my duties.'

'What private proceedings?' inquired Gerard, with some misgiving.

'Wall,' said Hiram slowly, looking from one to the other and stooping to fold a napkin on the table, 'the Apostle Paul says matrimony's honourable. As soon as ever I can manage it—I've got a little gell to take care of, and I'm going to take that way with her. And if you give me a berth that lets me marry, I shall do it.'

'Oh!' said Reginald, seeing Gerard a little dashed by this intimation. 'And who's the lady?'

Hiram straightened himself and looked at the little man keenly, inasmuch that Reginald felt embarrassed, and took refuge behind his eyeglass. 'Yes,' said Hiram, as if in answer to an inward inquiry, 'I'll answer that question.—The lady is the daughter of a bitter enemy of your family's, Mr Lumby. Her father is— Well, mister, the long and short of it is, her father's about the biggest thief unhung. His name's Garling.— At this the two friends glared at him and at each other.— 'That is so, gentlemen,' said Hiram with great gravity. 'I know something about it, and part of it I guess. Mr Garling married under a false name, and deserted his wife and daughter, when my little gell was a baby.' And in answer to Gerard's amazed inquiries, he told briefly all he knew of Garling, detailing with the rest the scene in the offices of the great firm.

'I think it possible that I may owe you something,' said Gerard enigmatically, when Hiram's narration was closed. The date of Hiram's interview with Garling was that of the elder Lumby's last visit to town. Gerard more than half-guessed the truth. 'I must leave you to arrange your own domestic affairs,' he said after a pause. 'I shall not interfere with them. And now—as a matter of form—though I could scarcely forego it, I must ask to see your employer, and make some inquiries about you.'

'That's only fair to me,' said Hiram drily; and retiring, sent up the master of the restaurant. Gerard made his inquiries.

'Well, gentlemen,' said the restaurateur, 'I should be very unwilling to give him a recommendation.'

'May I ask why?' demanded Gerard.

'Because,' returned Hiram's employer, with

a twinkle of his beady foreign eyes, 'he is the best servant I ever had, and I should be sorry to lose him.'

The two friends laughed at this; and the restaurateur, pleased at the success of his little jest, laughed also.

'He is honest?' said Gerard.

'As I have found him,' said his employer, 'as the day.'

'Sober?'

'Remarkably. He is good fellow,' declared the restaurateur, returning to his joke; 'and I am sorry to say it, if it is to lose me my Hiram Search.'

'You don't object to his bettering his position?' asked Gerard.

'No, sir,' the foreigner answered heartily. 'He is good fellow. He will get on.'

On the strength of this, Hiram was recalled, preliminaries were completed; and the waiter formally gave his employer a week's notice. It was agreed that he should present himself at Lumby Hall in complete readiness to enter upon his duties.

'You will have a good servant, sir,' said the little foreigner.

'And I shall have a good master,' said Hiram.

'I thought you had no masters,' said Gerard, 'you Americans?'

'If you call beef mutton, it don't alter the flavour much,' responded Hiram; 'and when I'm in a country, I reckon to try to speak the language.'

'Oh,' said Gerard, 'and how many languages do you speak?'

'I sha'n't take the cheer for languages at nary one of your universities yet awhile,' returned Hiram; 'but I've spent five years in the Lee-vant, and I've picked up a bit o' five or six—French, Italian, Spanish, Greek, German, and a smatterin' of Turkish. I can talk any one of 'em fit to be smiled at; but I can't read one, wuss luck.'

'Gerard,' said Reginald when the two were outside, 'it's my opinion that Mr Search is a jewel.'

'I think so too,' said Gerard; 'but we shall see.'

The week sped by rapidly; and Hiram at the appointed hour appeared at Lumby Hall. In less than a week after the date of his appearance, the cook and the upper-housemaid, who were both comely young women, and had hitherto been close companions, quarrelled over him. 'Ladies,' said Hiram, having observed this, and desiring to live at peace, 'I feel myself kind of shaking down in this charmin' society of yours. After a rovin' life, how sweet is do-mestic felicity! The view of the feminine character which you have afforded me sence I first entered the present abode of bliss, has sort of crystallised the notions of matrimony which up to that time were floatin' in my soul. I'll ask you to excuse the poetry; but that's the fact. And in consequence of the impression prodooed upon my mind by you two charmin' angels, I am goin' to get married.'

'Indeed, Mr Search,' said the upper-housemaid. She was a courageous woman, and bore the blow steadily. The cook was *hors de combat*. 'May we hask,' said the upper-housemaid, 'who is the appy bride?'

'The happy bride, as you air so flatterin' as to

call her, returned Hiram, 'will next week assume a position in the household of Mr Jolly.'

This was true. Hiram had already interested Gerard in his sweetheart's fortunes, and little Mary was elected as Constance's maid.

DR SALVIATI'S GLASS-WORKS.

THE last of the grand palaces having been built, and the Republic of Venice having touched the zenith of her glory and greatness, she thenceforth began to decline. The arts and art-industries for which she had hitherto been famous, shared her fall, and gradually sank into decay; while the old masters of Venetian mosaic, whose works survive to this day, finding that the world had no longer any work for them, died out and became extinct. Nor was this all; for their secrets died with them, and the art of mixing and colouring glass after the manner of the old masters was entirely lost to their posterity.

The glass-blowers of the neighbouring island of Murano did not fare much better than those of Venice; for their once extensive workshops dwindled down into a few poor huts, and that which had once ranked as an art, sank down into a common handicraft, dragging out a miserable existence; while the glass-makers of England and Bohemia easily drove them from the market even in their own land.

It was when things were at this very low ebb, that Dr Salvati, a native of Vicenza, who had studied the law in Padua, and had had a good practice in Venice for twenty years, chanced one day to come across 'George Sand's' novel, *Les Maitres Mosaïstes*, in which she describes the brilliant period of the Venetian picture-mosaics.

It is well known that the five domes of St Mark's were once adorned inside with glorious pictures in glass-mosaic on a gold ground. The pictures themselves were well-nigh indestructible; but, most unfortunately, the building which contained them rested on a very unstable foundation; the vaulted domes were the first to sink, and parts of the mosaic cracked and fell out. There had already been some talk of repairing these pictures; but no one was bold enough to make the attempt; and in 1859 fresh lamentations were raised over the continued decay of such valuable works of art. It was just at this time that Dr Salvati's interest had been awakened in the subject; and being firmly convinced that the art-genius is hereditary, he first looked through the 'golden books' of the old Republic, in which the names of the best masters were formerly entered, and then made inquiries in Venice and Murano, where at length he had the pleasure of discovering certain descendants of the two famous families of Radi and Bonvico, who were still connected with glass-making. They were induced to join Dr Salvati; and a series of experiments was instituted with the object of re-discovering the old lost secret of colouring and mixing; the result being that one is now simply amazed at

the number of tints in use. The seven colours of the rainbow are now subdivided into twenty-two thousand shades, of which two hundred are flesh-tints alone. The lawyer spared no pains to accomplish his purpose; and in one way a layman has an advantage over others, for he is not fettered by traditions, and is ready without prejudice to take up what is new and original, as the history of discoveries very generally shows.

The gold paste which almost always formed the background of the old mosaics, was said by technical workmen to be especially difficult to imitate; but the Doctor solved the enigma in a very simple manner by placing a very thin plate of gold on a sheet of glass, covering it with a thinner sheet of the same, and then fusing the three together. This process has not been found to answer with silver, and the silver paste, so far as we are aware, has yet to be discovered. A few years after the work had been taken in hand, the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice announced that Dr Salvati's colours equalled and in some instances even surpassed those of the ancients, while he had doubled the number of tints. The raw material was therefore now ready; but unexpected difficulties arose as to the method of using it. The old masters worked from cartoons, which they copied bit by bit, putting each cube of glass at once into its place in the wall; but they were not mere servile copyists; quite the contrary; they were real artists, the only difference being that they painted with glass instead of with the brush. Men such as these with their skill and experience, as well as their ability, were not to be conjured up out of the ground even in Italy, where art is said to be indigenous; but necessity is ever the mother of invention, and Dr Salvati contrived a method of producing the mosaic pictures, which has an immense advantage over the old one, and insures the most faithful reproduction of the original design, as the work does not need to be done on the spot or on an unsteady scaffolding, as was previously the case; and it is no longer necessary for the copyist to be an almost greater artist than he who makes the design. As only technical skill is required, the work can be done at a much cheaper rate, and may be more extensively employed.

The modern mosaic-worker lays his cartoon or working-drawing on a table, face upwards. By means of a sharp hammer and anvil, he divides his pancakes of coloured glass into small dice, measuring a centimetre—a little over one-third of an inch—each way, and then places them on the picture, matching each tint and shade with the utmost exactness. When the design is entirely covered, he pours over it a fine cement, which penetrates every crack, and unites the whole into one solid mass. It is then placed in a shallow zinc tray; the design is washed off, and the picture appears, a true copy of the original, but with greater warmth of colour. The effect is so life-like and artistic, as Herr Gampe says, and the

work is of such a lasting nature, that its value was soon generally recognised. Scarcely twenty years have passed since the revival of the art, and already specimens of Salviati's glass mosaics are to be seen throughout the civilised world; for example, in the new Opera-house in Paris; Parliament Buildings, Washington; Kensington Museum; Windsor Chapel; the Cathedrals of Aix-la-Chapelle and Torcello; the Rotunda of the Vienna Universal Exhibition, &c.; to say nothing of the private mansions and palaces which may be seen thus adorned throughout Europe, in Cairo and Alexandria, and even in the giant cities of the West.

The astonishing success which had attended his efforts, induced Salviati in 1862 to consider the possibility of reviving the glass-manufacture of Murano, which had fallen into a state of such dismal decay; and to this end he ransacked old churches, castles, and museums, to find some of the ancient Venetian models; his idea being that the first thing necessary was to accustom the eye of the glass-blower once more to beauty of form, and that then his artistic skill and feeling would revive spontaneously. It was quite certain that glass itself had not altered during the lapse of centuries, and was just as ductile, just as plastic in its red-hot state, as ever it had been in the days of the Doges. And here let it be noted that glass-making in Venice is a very different thing from glass-making in England and Bohemia. Glass-cutting, which is so extensively practised in both these countries, is quite unknown in Murano, as are also painting and gilding. The Venetian glass-blower models his article entirely while the glass is in a state of fusion, and has nothing more to do with it when it has cooled. He never puts the colour on afterwards, but mixes it in the liquid paste; and he has to complete the most elaborate articles in a few minutes—every second being valuable, as the glass would become brittle if allowed to cool rapidly, and if kept too long out of the annealing oven. It is therefore essential that the eye and hand of the workman be trained to the utmost precision; for though he may find no great difficulty in making a dozen wine-glasses of exactly the same height and size, with nothing but his eye to guide him, it requires a very high degree of skill as well as artistic feeling to enable him to bring out all the delicate lines and curves equally, considering the rapidity with which he is obliged to work.

The Bohemians and the English, again, make their crystal glass of very decided colours, such as the Venetian glass could not stand, its paper-like delicacy and elegance requiring much more aerial tints, if form and colour are to be harmonised as they should be. Every furnace in Murano is accordingly surrounded by a regular laboratory, where the aesthetics of colour are carried to such a wonderful degree of perfection, that a visit to Dr Salviati's extensive premises in the Palazzo Swift sends one home amazed at the beauty and variety of the flower-like tints employed. All is brilliant, but nothing is glaring, and even the ruby-glass, which owes its peculiar brilliancy to an admixture of gold, shimmers with subdued radiance. Endless experiments have been necessary before certain shades of colour could be obtained, and there has been considerable diffi-

culty in reproducing among others the opal glass of the old Venetians, which has no value at all unless it has a tinge or rather *suspension* of red playing through it. The play of light, which is often surprisingly beautiful, depends in great measure upon the thickness of the glass, which requires the most careful regulation.

With regard to form, it must be admitted that Salviati sometimes overshoots his mark; there is a certain hyper-delicacy about some of his drinking-glasses, which look not merely fragile but weak, and one feels uncomfortable in the presence of such super-sensitive articles. Some of the showy glass chandeliers, too, are as much overloaded with leaves, flowers, and ornamentation as a German inn on a fête-day.

Another highly decorated article, which must disturb the peace of mind of its owner, is the Venetian mirror, which is actually made in Belgium, and only sent to Murano to be adorned with its wreath of flowers. It is impossible to help thinking of the unfortunate housemaid whose duty it will be to keep it clean, and one foresees that some fine day her duster will catch in the prickly leaves and blossoms, and then down the whole thing will go with a crash.

It is hardly possible to describe the process of modelling, any more than that of painting and carving. The visitor sees a workman dip his blowpipe into the molten glass, and take thence a shapeless lump, which a few dexterous touches and a little breath convert into an exquisite little sea-horse, a vase, or a filigree glass, which looks exactly as if it had been woven; but how all this is done he cannot say, for it looks like the result of magic. Larger articles require re-heating, and this has to be done with extreme caution, lest their shape should be spoilt.

We may mention by the way, that most of the precious and semi-precious stones are imitated at Murano, and are bought by the Arab merchants, who sell them to the negroes. A handful of common glass mixed with certain earths and colours will produce what are to all appearance splendid specimens of agate and malachite.

But to return to Dr Salviati. The most difficult part of his enterprise has been, not the re-discovery of the secrets of the old masters, but the prosaic business matters inevitably connected with the establishment of his young art-industry. There is nothing of the tradesman about him; if there had been, if he had begun by calculating his chances of success from a commercial point of view, he would probably soon have given up the whole thing. Instead of calculating, however, he experimented, and so it happened that in 1866, he found that the whole of his very respectable fortune had been turned into glass. Thereupon, John Bull came to the rescue, and an English Company was formed, with Dr Salviati as its technical director; but though no doubt this was a great blessing for poor helpless Murano, it was hardly likely that the inventor would look on with equanimity while the large profits won by his own talents and great personal sacrifices flowed steadily into England. After a while, therefore, he resigned his post, and in 1877 founded a business of his own, and opened depôts in all the chief capitals of Europe. A number of his old workmen gladly returned to him, while others set up

for themselves; and now Murano is once again the busy place it was in the olden days, while Dr Salvati has been loaded with orders, medals, and diplomas.

THE CLIFFORD DIAMONDS.

CHAPTER I.—WHAT WE THOUGHT OF THEM.

WE were a family of quite middle-class people, not in the rank of the Cliffords at all; and yet our dear father and our uncles were Sir Arthur Clifford's most intimate friends. That was how we came to know anything about the diamonds. We lived close to Grange, the grand old home of the Cliffords. It was a superb old North-west of England house, set in magnificent woods, overlooking the Irish Channel. Thorp Uplands, our home, was just a rambling place, which had grown with the growth of our family, from the squat farmhouse where our grandfather, Hugh Thorp, lived in his comfortable yeomanly style, to its present condition, when it might be termed a 'commodious residence;' not the least pretentious, but oh! so snug, with its long passages and unexpected staircases, and windows stuck in anyhow.

Besides our father and mother, there were six of us. Tom, our eldest brother, was in Uncle Thomas's cotton mill, which was situated quite near our farm; Paul, who was next to him, was in the navy, a messmate of Jack Clifford, Sir Arthur's second son; and our youngest boy Joe was in Uncle Hugh's warehouse at Liverpool. As Tom lived with his uncle at the factory, we girls ruled the roast at Thorp Uplands. There were Ruth and Naomi, the twins; and Olive, my humble self. Every day one or other of us went across the park to sit with Lady Clifford and read to her for an hour or so; then, if the day were fine, we would take her out for a walk round the quaint old garden, or drive her about the lovely park; for Lady Clifford had no daughters of her own, and was blind.

That was not the only trial which weighed heavily upon the great family of Clifford of Grange. There was a sadness, a blight upon them, which shadowed and oppressed them all; for they were poor, miserably poor for people of their condition. I have heard my uncle say that when all claims on the great estates were paid off, Sir Arthur Clifford had scarcely four hundred pounds a year to live upon. Young Arthur Clifford, the heir, was in the Guards, and Jack, as already mentioned, in the navy. Only that Lady Clifford had been an heiress, the sons must have done as our boys did—gone into business. Uncle Thomas said it would have been the wisest thing they could have done. Perhaps he was right; but then Sir Arthur and my Lady were old-fashioned folks, proud as Lucifer, and very tenacious of old ideas. I think the sight of her son with a pen behind his ear, perched on an office stool, would have driven Lady Clifford mad.

We were just yeoman folks a hundred years ago, we Thorps; but our grandfather was a clever, far-seeing man. He cast his eyes upon the rapid brook which summer and winter went babbling down the glen at the back of 'Thorp's Farm,' as the house was then called. An artist

might have thought of the beauty of the rushing stream; a poet might have jingled words to match its rhythm; but the practical Yorkshireman saw in it so much power running to waste; and after much bargaining, he obtained the use of it from the Sir Jasper Clifford of his time, a youth who was spending his income after the reckless fashion of the day, and who was glad to get the big sum Hugh Thorp laid down for the signing of the lease. The money went in a night at Brooks's; but the mill my grandfather built stands to this day.

We own a fair share of the Clifford estate too, and Uncle Tom is one of the chief creditors who have claims on the property. I often feel deeply for the Cliffords, because we seem to have risen upon their downfall. And yet the glamour of the old grandeur clings to the ancient house; to the handsome middle-aged baronet, and his still beautiful wife; to the Hall, with its great shadowy galleries, where generation after generation of painted Cliffords look down from the walls upon the decay of the family. But especially does the magic linger over the ancient chest wherein, fast locked in an iron-bound casket, reposed unseen the Clifford diamonds.

As children, we used to hear about their splendour from our dear mother, who had seen them gleaming in a flaming ring around Lady Clifford's slender throat, springing in an arch of fire above her gentle brow, and burning on her arms and bosom with a blaze like the sun at noonday. Wonderful things, too, were blent with those magnificent jewels in our imaginations: such as the magic gem which lit up a whole chamber by its glow, in one of those tales of wonder and delight, the *Arabian Nights*; Sindbad's Valley of Diamonds, from the same delicious volume; and pictures we had seen of Solomon's Temple; all which were brought to our minds by the mere mention of Lady Clifford's diamonds.

They were historic stones too; for the necklace and coronet had been in pledge to raise money for the king in the sad times of the Civil Wars; and the bracelets were a gift of King Charles II. to a fair Lady Clifford of his time. Then the earrings were made of jewels won by an heroic Clifford upon Indian battlefields in a later generation; while the stomacher was a trophy gained by another son of the house—his share of the plunder of a great galleon in the war with Spain. There were stars and pins and brooches too; and local valuation set down the diamonds as being worth a perfectly fabulous sum; but Uncle Thomas used to say they were not worth quite so much as people thought; and we somehow felt that he understood their value to a farthing. One day, when we were talking of them, he said abruptly: 'I say it is a sin and a shame to keep so much money lying idle in a box. Twenty thousand pounds-worth of senseless stones locked up, never seeing the light of day, while the Cliffords are in such want of money. It is simply madness.'

'Oh, Uncle Thomas, are they worth so much?' I cried. 'I thought they were not so very valuable.'

'Eh?' he said, turning sharply on me; 'you have more sense than I gave you credit for. Now, Ruth and Naomi there are firmly persuaded that those baubles are worth treble what I said.'

The twins lifted their voices in indignant protest. Uncle laughed, and went on: 'Yes; I call it a crime of the Cliffords to keep that large sum lying there while they are in such need.'

'But, uncle,' I said, 'surely things are no worse now than they have been for some time. The Cliffords do not seem to be in greater need of money than usual.'

'Humph!' uncle said, casting a meaning glance at the twins.

I understood him. He meant that there was something to be told which would not bear telling in the ears of 'the children,' as we still persisted in calling our two youngest and prettiest. Taking up his hint, I suggested a game of Spoil Five, an old-fashioned pastime, of which our good, kind-hearted, hard-headed uncle is exceedingly fond.

Uncle Thomas has never been married. He lives in a cosy unpretentious house close to the mills; and brother Tom, as already mentioned, lives with him. Of ourselves, I may say that I am older by three years than the twins, that is to say, I was five-and-twenty past that evening when we sat and played Spoil Five, and the twins were just twenty-two. They were wonderfully pretty girls, and alike in features, although quite different in colour; Ruth's hair being a deep russet brown; and Naomi's flaxen, with just enough of a warm tinge in it to light it up. Both had clear gray eyes; but Ruth's looked darkest, being shaded by very thick and long lashes the colour of her wavy hair. If I could choose between them, I should have called her the prettier of the two. She had more warmth and colour about her, and certainly she had the sweeter disposition; but every one called Naomi the beauty, and sometimes I joined the popular opinion. I myself am not a beauty; I never was. Only just a plump, good-humoured little lass; very brown and healthy-looking, with nothing special about my face save and except the Thorp eyes. We all had rather good eyes, and mine were no worse than the rest of them.

We were a very happy household; but for my own part, all the poetry of life lay at Grange. To go up the long winding avenue, under those beeches, which were planted in the days of the Restoration in place of the more ancient ones hewn down by Cromwell's troopers in the troublous times—to enter the grand old hall, where once the 'Merry Monarch' had banqueted with the young and fair Lady Clifford—to walk on tiptoe through those great rooms, silent and sad, but so wonderfully suggestive in their faded splendour—this formed the greatest pleasure, the fairest romance, of my young life. At home was honest prose; at Grange was an inexhaustible source of poetry and romance. And then dear Lady Clifford was so fond of me! Ruth came next in her affections; Naomi last; not that she was not fond of Naomi too; but then, of the three of us, she was the one who went least often to read and walk with her.

I think the first wave of the great tide of change which swept round us and altered everything, touched us that evening as we laughed and made merry over our old-fashioned game of Spoil Five. Once it was done, uncle kissed the twins, bade them good-night; and then, when they were gone, he turned to mother.

'Frances,' he said, 'can you spare me Olive for a

day or two? That house of mine is in a sad state for want of a woman in it, and she has such a way of bringing things into order.'

Mother smiled. 'Well, I can scarcely spare her,' she said. 'But as she is not going very far, I suppose I must do without her for a little.'

I was much surprised. Uncle never had made such a request before; and even to my unobservant eyes, it was plain that something underlay the trifling reason he gave for requiring my presence.

'When do you want her to go?' mother asked.

'Now—to-night, if possible,' Uncle Thomas said; and when mother demurred at the suddenness of the request, father cried from behind his newspaper: 'Yes, yes; let the child go. Why, it's only a step.' And I knew that there was some good reason why I should so instantly make a change of residence.

My preparations were not extensive. In half an hour, uncle and I were walking slowly along the winding path which led from the Uplands to the mills, a servant having preceded me with my box.

Once well away from the house, uncle stood still, and turned me round so that he could see my face in the silver light, for the moon was almost at the full. 'Olive,' he said huskily, 'I know you are a girl of sense.—Now, don't make any protest, because I have great faith in you. I've brought you down to my house. What for, do you think?'

I said I had no idea.

'Well, then—to entertain an unexpected guest.'

'Uncle?'

'Yes; that unhappy boy, Arthur Clifford.' Uncle spoke in a tone of deep vexation.

'Arthur Clifford! Why is he not at Grange? What has brought him home?' These and a host of other questions I poured out as we stood face to face in the moonlight.

He drew my arm through his, and we walked slowly down the path in silence for a few minutes, before he answered me. 'He has come home because he is in great trouble,' said my uncle in a low voice; 'and he has taken refuge with me because he dare not face Sir Arthur or my Lady.'

'In great trouble?' I questioned eagerly. 'What kind of trouble, uncle?'

'Money trouble.'

'Oh, that is the least of all troubles,' I said lightly, in my ignorance.

'Is it?' said Uncle Thomas bitterly—'is it? Child, how little you know! No matter. This unhappy lad has been driven to do a very foolish and dangerous thing in order to raise money. Now, he feels the consequence; and in mortal dread of an exposure, flies to me. Silly boy! I was very angry with him when he came this evening—very; but now I am beginning to pity him. He was placed in a very false position. Sir Arthur never should have put him in the Guards, amongst rich young fellows who need never give a second thought to what they spend.'

'What has he done, uncle?' I asked.

'I may as well tell you, knowing you to be a sensible little girl, and that what I say will go no further. He put his father's name on a bill for three hundred pounds, and now he

has not a ha'penny to meet it. The bill may be in Sir Arthur's hands to-night, for all we know.'

'Three hundred pounds is not such a very large sum is it, uncle?' I said gently.

'Do you mean that I might give it to him? Eh puss? I can't say I see my way to that at all,' uncle replied. 'No; I'm a fool about some things, I grant you, but not such a fool as all that.'

I walked beside him silently for a few paces; then he spoke again. 'Just see what want of money has done in that family. Here's this thoughtless youth just ruined; and'—uncle stamped his foot on the path—'here is a fortune under us—coal, my girl, coal and iron enough to make the Cliffords millionaires. No capital to work the mines; no energy to start them; and two as fine lads as ever lived just lost for want of money, while twenty thousand pounds lie idle in a box! It's enough to drive a man mad!'

'Why don't you start the mines yourself, uncle?' I said. 'You have energy enough, and money too.'

'Ay, but not years enough, my girl. No, no! I've got too many irons in the fire as it is.—Here we are. Meet the lad as if you knew nothing.'

It was easier said than done, for, as we entered the library at the Mills House, Arthur Clifford sprang forward eagerly to meet us. I fancied his countenance fell as he saw me; and an instantaneous flash of memory recalled sundry little things I had observed between him and Naomi when he was last amongst us. I remembered, even while I was shaking hands with him and saying how surprised I was to see him, that they used to play croquet together a good deal in those days, and that they danced together whenever opportunity offered. Could it be possible there was any kind of understanding between them?

Uncle Thomas had left us together, and for a while neither of us said much. At length Arthur lifted his dark curly head, and said abruptly: 'I did not expect you to-night, Olive.'

'Did you not? I suppose just as little as I expected to see you.'

'Well, no; not in that way, my dear girl. I knew Mr Thorp would bring some one back; but'—He stopped short, and cast a shy embarrassed look into my face.

'You did not expect me?' I said laughingly.

'No; I did not.'

'And which of us, then, did you expect?'

'Naomi.'

I laughed again—a forced laugh. Here were my suspicions proved true.

'I know she would have come over had she thought I was here,' he continued. 'Never mind. I'll see her to-morrow.'

I did not say anything; but perhaps he saw by my face that I thought it was not likely. He rose from his chair and sauntered to the hearth, where he stood leaning his arm on the mantel-shelf, and looking into the red depths of the fire for a few moments; then: 'This is an unlucky business, Olive,' he said moodily.

I do not know why, but it seemed to me as if he looked upon his evil deed rather in the light of a misfortune, than in that of a grave

fault; and now a feeling of half-contempt mingled with the pity I had at first felt for him.

'Yes,' I said coldly; 'it's a bad business.'

'Pon my word, Olive, I had no idea it would turn out like this, when I just jotted down "Bart," after my name on the dirty scrap of stamped paper. See here; I give you my honour I wasn't responsible that day. We had been keeping it up rather hard—Pedder and Wilcox and one or two other fellows; and I—Well, the fact is I had been having too much liquor—don't look so shocked, my dear Olive; hundreds of fellows do it—and when old Shylock came bothering about the cash I owed him, in desperation I signed the governor's name to a bill.'

'Oh, Arthur!'

'Ay, you may say so; but you'd cry louder if you knew it all.' He lounged across the room to the buffet, poured out half a tumbler of sherry, drank it at a draught, and returned to the fireside. 'I've shocked you terribly, I'm sure of it,' he said, and paused moodily. 'What tempted the governor to put me into the Guards, I'd like to know?' he asked in a low bitter voice. 'It was like flinging a man into the fire, and not expecting him to be burned. Such folly!'

'It strikes me that you are ready to blame every one but yourself, Arthur,' I replied, for I was beginning to feel more and more contempt for the man as he stood there trying to vindicate himself. And could our dear Naomi care for him? My heart ached as I thought of it.

'Well, why shouldn't I speak the truth? It was madness of them to let me mix with a swell set of fellows without sixpence in my pocket. Look here, Olive—did you see the mother to-day?'

'No,' I answered abruptly. 'Ruth was at Grange to-day. I am going to-morrow.'

'Are you?' His face brightened. 'See here. One of those diamond stars of hers would pay up all, and set me on my feet. Perhaps you'd ask her?'

'I ask her to sell her diamonds? Are you mad?'

'No; not the least bit in the world. I'd sell them all, the whole lot, if I had it in my power.'

'Arthur Clifford, I'm ashamed of you,' I said haughtily, and left him to his own devices.

A STATE BANQUET IN MADAGASCAR.

'Mr. Frost, you are wanted for duty with the Admiral this afternoon, sir,' was announced with a grin by old Blowhard, our venerable quartermaster.

'That's rather a kill-joy for you,' sung out a voice from a neighbouring cabin, owned by C—, my opposite number.

For the benefit of the uninitiated, it may be as well to explain that one's 'opposite number' is the man who keeps the 'opposite' watch, or next watch but one, to one's self, and consequently the man to exchange duty with. Truly, it was rather a kill-joy, for C— had undertaken my duty that day, and I had made every preparation for an expedition to the marshes after duck.

I was soon enlightened as to the nature of the duty by a supplementary order brought by the midshipman of the watch, and delivered in what little Beckford thought a really officer-like style. 'Tail-coats, epaulets, white waistcoats, and swords, is the rig for officers going on shore with the Admiral, sir,' said Beckford.

'What's it for, Becky?' I asked.

'Oh! a feed, I believe, sir, with some of the nigger swells'—by which I understood Mr Beckford to intimate that I was to attend the Admiral to a state banquet given to him by the representatives of the Hova government at Tamatave.

Our good craft H.M.S. *Who's Afraid* had cast anchor in Tamatave Bay, Madagascar, a day or two before, and towards the end of as jolly a cruise as ever ship had the good fortune to sail; Tamatave being one of the last places we had to call at in the cooler and more southerly latitudes, before running up into warmer regions again.

Most of our hearts and some of our pockets stood sadly in need of repair. I was in the pitiable condition of suffering from both.

During the few days we had been lying in Tamatave Bay, I had found time for a cruise of inspection on shore, and had succeeded in discovering good chances of making a fairish bag of duck in the marshes. I had subsequently made all the necessary arrangements with my 'opposite number' for a free afternoon, when, as I have just described, my pleasant anticipations were shattered at one fell swoop by old Blowhard opening the wardroom door behind me and making the announcement already recorded. I believe, judging by the happy expression the old wretch wore, that he took a malicious pleasure in extinguishing the one bright spot in my otherwise gloomy prospects.

Half-past three is an awful time for a square meal; but the Hova government are evidently not of Sydney Smith's opinion with regard to lunch being 'an insult to one's breakfast, and an injury to one's dinner,' and had fixed upon an hour which heaped insult and injury on every other meal of the day.

There was no shirking it; and half-past two saw us all arrayed in our 'war-paint,' packed in boats, and towed ashore by the steam pinnace. It was a lovely afternoon in the cool season, with a light southerly monsoon blowing, and a regular fleecy trade-wind sky. About twenty minutes' steaming of the sturdy little pinnace brought us to the principal landing-place of the chief town on the west coast of Madagascar.

It was apparently a grand day amongst the inhabitants of Tamatave. A large crowd of those who had nothing better to do had assembled on the strand to see the Admiral (as the newspapers have it) his numerous and brilliant staff. Those 'who have nothing better to do' seem to form the major part of the population of an African town.

The costume of the natives is simple and inexpensive; not being an artist, I cannot say whether it is picturesque, but I should say it is cool enough. It struck one that the intelligent Malagash had flung himself head-foremost into a grass-cloth pillow-case, and had succeeded in boring his round woolly black head through the closed end of it, and in poking his arms out at the sides.

Comparing, however, their costumes with our heavy blue cloth and gold lace, I was bound to admit that the natives in that respect were really the more civilised race of the two. Standing on the hot sand under a blazing sun, in the same dress we are accustomed to wear in the Channel, made us feel very 'Turkish-bathy,' and possessed of less wisdom than our dusky brethren.

All that was to be seen of the great city from the landing-place was a row of huts, with a wooden building kept as a restaurant by an enterprising Bourbonnais. But in front of the row of huts was a sight which the natives thought could not fail to strike even us with awe. It was the guard of honour! The men composing it were drawn up in line facing us, and as the Admiral stepped out of the boat, they went through their performance in grand style. They were a guard representing, I imagine, all the military forces of the island, for they were dressed in every conceivable uniform—cavalry, hussar, artillery, grenadier. Even a marine uniform was in the ranks. They were rigged out in east-off English uniforms. Trousers seemed to have been issued only as a mark of distinction, for they were not universally worn. I thought it a doubtful benefit, comparing the temperature of Madagascar with that of the country they had been originally meant for. The arms seem to have been provided on the principle on which a boy collects postage-stamps, namely, to get as many different sorts as possible. The most impressive part of the proceeding was the salute. The commanding officer stepped out and yelled his orders in English. (This was perhaps meant as a compliment to the British Admiral, or resulted from the fact that a retired sergeant of our army had been instructor-in-chief to the Madagascar army). 'Silence in the ranks!' he bellowed forth. No talking was going on at the time; if there had been, the order would not have been understood, being given in English; but I suspect, as Jack says, 'It's in their gunnery-book, and they has to say it.' 'Rear rank, take opin' ordah!' was next yelled out. There wasn't any rear rank, so I don't know how the commanding officer got this order executed. As there was no appearance of a hitch anywhere, and he made no pause, it was apparently done to his entire satisfaction; and the next moment he sung out, 'Shoddah ums! Present ums!' and the Tower musket, the old flint lock, the chassépot, the double-barrelled gas-pipe, the German gun, and the rest of the collection, came up to the 'Présent' more or less together.

The Admiral returned the salute with an immovable face. He loved a joke, and had as keen an eye for the ludicrous as most people; so the command of his countenance must have cost him an effort.

The scene of our banqueting was some way off, and the governor had provided chairs and the usual team of four bearers for each officer, to convey us from the landing-place. These chairs are simply seats with a back, which are secured to long poles, and a small board slung underneath to rest the feet on. The bearers are fine sturdy fellows; and the distance and pace they go at are simply marvellous, especially

when one considers the simple fare they live on.

Our road lay along the principal street, which runs the whole length of the town. The houses on each side are nearly all one-storied wooden houses, occupied by French residents from Mauritius and Bourbon. They seemed cheerful, clean, and tidy little houses enough. Our mode of progression may be an every-day sight to these good folks; but the sight of an English Admiral and all his officers in full fig carried shoulder-high on apparently nothing but two long poles, struck me as rather comical.

As we approached the entrance to an old and rather dilapidated-looking fort, a coated native dashed past us to turn out the guard stationed by the narrow passage through which we were to enter the courtyard. The guard consisted of one man in the uniform of a dragoon, but without trousers, followed by another with a sword, as officer of the guard. The latter seemed rather put out that his guard was so small, but determined to do his best before the foreigners, and make up for the smallness of the guard by the extra grandeur of his orders. The guard visibly trembled at the sight of us, but the officer was equal to the occasion. 'Silence in the ranks!' he roared, out, standing on the right of the sentinel, and putting his mouth about an inch or two from the poor fellow's ear. 'Rear rank, take opia ordah!' he next shrieked out to the unhappy warrior. The sentry stood the yelling in his ear pretty well, and at the third order, 'Shoddah ums!' he threw his old gas-pipe about in capital style. When the salute was over, the order for the other part of him to take close order was given, and the guard dismissed. He looked a happier man, and retired into the kennel which was his guard-house with the air of having done something to deserve well of his country.

We alighted in a courtyard just inside the walls, and a narrow flight of steps brought us into a mud-built room over the fort. It was a very long low room, with few windows. The table was spread for between twenty and thirty guests, and I could not help meditating prospectively on its stuffiness when all should be present. We were received by the governor, who, with a Princess of the blood-royal, did the honours. She was a stout, cheery little body, with curly hair, nearly white, who spoke French perfectly, having, I believe, been educated in France. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hova government had come down from the capital to meet the Admiral, and was also there to receive him.

Madagascar is rather strangely divided into two races—the Hovas and the Sakalavas. The former are recognised by us as the ruling race, and their government is held responsible in all dealings and treaties with our government. The Hovas are not, however, entirely masters of the island, for the Sakalavas hold a great deal of the southern and western parts of it; but they must eventually come under the Hova rule, for the latter, in place of being divided into innumerable tribes, are united under their Queen Ranavalamanjaka, and are certainly making rapid strides in civilisation.

The governor of Tamatave, the judge and

other officials, the principal inhabitants, our consul, a missionary gentleman, and ourselves, completed the party. The Hova gentlemen were dressed in sober black of Parisian fashion of a former date. We were received as if we had been entering a European court, our hosts bowing profusely. A few of the Hova officials could speak a little French; one could even speak a little English as well—he was, I think, the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The usual introductions being over—a thoroughly British method of shaking hands was adopted—small-talk, and very difficult small-talk, was attempted. English-French and Madagascary-French don't fit in at all well; so, after a few remarks which we neither of us understood, my Hova friend and I dropped into a mutually accommodating plan of 'Oui, oui,' and a smile after each other's stuttering attempts. After some interesting conversation of this description, we took our seats, or rather stood behind them; for, as a sort of preliminary grace, the healths of Queen Victoria and Ranavalamanjaka were proposed. Certainly the good folks in Madagascar are more loyal than we are; there is much greater merit in thinking of one's Queen when hungry before a meal, than after it, when one is usually—that is, if the dinner has been a good one—rather inclined to think well and kindly of all. The toast was received by all with loud applause, though the liqueur in which it was drunk was poured out of a bottle looking suspiciously like 'hair-oil,' and tasted like a mixture of lime-juice and glycerine. The health-drinking over, we settled down to the real business of the day. The governor sat at one end of the table, and the other end was pretty well filled by the fat jovial little Princess—Julie by name.

There was a long pause after the soup, and an uneasy stir was perceptible amongst our hosts. There was an occasional inquiry from the governor, and a message sent off by a slave; but with no satisfactory result. Our laboured attempts at polite and easy conversation made every minute seem an hour, for even 'Oui, oui,' grew a trifle uninteresting, after being repeated a few hundred times. Things must have been looking serious indeed; for in about ten minutes, the governor despatched the Chief-Justice to the kitchen to discover the cause of the delay. He returned from his mission looking very blank, and no ray of hope cheered the heart of the governor. Punishment is severe and summary in Madagascar, and I trembled for the fate of the cook and his staff. Another local swell, a species of Lord Mayor, was next sent posting down to the kitchen, but he returned ere long, having been as unsuccessful as the Chief-Justice. There was a decided hitch somewhere; and I was beginning to congratulate myself on a happy escape, when the fat little Princess jumped off her seat, and accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, toddled out of the room, no doubt making for the kitchen, to discover the cause of the delay. Either her charms had been irresistible, or the Minister for Foreign Affairs had taken up a very decided 'Stand-no-nonsense' sort of tone with the head of the culinary department, for they returned triumphant in a few minutes. They each headed a column of blacks who streamed into the room after them, bearing huge dishes,

on which lay enormous roast turkeys, geese, ducks, and guinea-fowls. The number of dishes was something stupendous. After the first detachment had deposited their burdens on the table, there was a slight confusion, for there was no room for the second instalment which was being carried in by the next column of slaves. However, by dint of squeezing and shoving, they were all located, and three roast animals per guest were provided by our hospitable entertainers.

Now the battle raged fast and furious. The slaves bustled about, placing the good things before us. The various dishes were, I believe, excellent, all cooked in the French style; but one could not get over a certain nervous feeling about them—an Englishman is so absurdly squeamish about his food. (By the way, I presently discovered that the cause of the delay in the appearance of our second course had been a block in the street between the French restaurant where the dinner was cooked, and the banquetting hall; a most probable occurrence, seeing the crowd of slaves who were employed to bring the viands.)

We were pretty merry in spite of all; and as our remarks could not be understood except by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was well away from my part of the table, we managed to indulge in a little innocent chaff. Our harmless prattle was flowing smoothly, when suddenly a crash was heard in the courtyard below, which almost lifted us off our seats, and made us look wildly round the table and at each other, to find out what on earth it could mean. The crash was followed by a braying, drumming, and shrieking, as if three regiments of drums and fifes and about fifty buglers were all practising their several calls at the same time, entirely independent of each other. I wondered if they had designs on bringing the roast turkeys, &c., back to life. When we had recovered from the first shock of the thing, we could trace the faintest suspicion of a tune running through it. One of us, who affected an ear for music, pronounced it to be an attempt at *God Save the Queen*. We loyally stood up. It went on for an unconscionable time; but at length they stopped—I thought for want of wind.

Before starting for this entertainment, the Admiral, who is an awful old wag himself, had told us very solemnly that there was to be no laughing, and that our deportment was to be one of great gravity and decorum. It was a precious severe trial of our discipline in this respect when after a short pause the band set up a more hideous bray than ever, and when, at the end of the performance, we heard him remark very blandly: 'Ah! that's very pretty, very pretty indeed. What is the name of this piece?' To which His Excellency of the Foreign Portfolio replied: 'Him no got proper name; him only Malagash tune.'

The 'Malagash tune,' mercifully varied with a few 'brilliant flashes of silence,' was resumed and continued till the period for the toasting and speechifying arrived. The little Princess left the end of the table—as a sign, I suppose, that the ladies had withdrawn—and took her place next to our consul in a semi-official capacity as interpreter; and most efficiently did she perform that

office. Our consul made the first speech, and, as far as my knowledge of French would allow me to judge, it seemed a particularly good one. He had to pause every now and then, to allow the little Princess to translate what he had been saying into the Hova language. The speechifying being over, that pitiless band again pealed forth its terrible thunder; but as soon as politeness would allow, the Admiral, to our infinite delight, made a move to go. We found our 'four-in-hands' in attendance, stopping the way below. The bearers, no doubt, had been enjoying the dulcet strains of their native music while we were at table.

We were on board again by seven. It had been something entirely new, and something to fill a letter home with; so, though I had missed my duck-shooting, I was not altogether sorry I had gone.

THE SERVANT-GIRL QUESTION.

How to obtain good domestic servants, who will give their services for reasonable periods of time, and so reduce to a minimum the necessity for those repeated changes which disturb the even tenor of our family life, is the perplexing problem which is vexing heart and brain in thousands of households in our country. That it may be long occupy a foremost place on the list of social questions pressing for solution, is no doubt the devout wish of many a matron who can think and speak feelingly on this subject.

The domestic-servant difficulty has already been dwelt upon in the pages of this *Journal*, and hints touching mutual relations have been suggested to mistress and servant, for the consideration of both. But although satisfactory results may be expected, and do in some instances flow from efforts mutually put forth in the direction indicated, it is still a discouraging fact that they are exceptional in the experience of a considerable number of mistresses. Within the remembrance of many persons now living, it used to be no uncommon event in the life of a servant-girl for her to remain five, ten, and even fifteen years in her situation. It is an event of more frequent occurrence nowadays for a kind-hearted lady, actuated it may be in the first place by motives of charity, but none the less anxious to secure the services of a good servant, to admit some waif or stray into her household, teach her a servant's duties, and after having brought her to a fair degree of efficiency, to have the mortification of seeing her protégée at the expiration of six months quit her service for that of another mistress.

The difficulties which beset the domestic-servant question would seem to call for the application of some extraneous means—some established, organised methods, by means of which we could reach out a friendly hand to our servant-girls, appeal to their self-respect, promote their interests, and hold out to them inducements to exercise zeal and diligence in the discharge of household duties, to aim at excellence and fidelity in the performance of them, and, moreover, to seek to attach themselves with greater constancy to the service of their employers. We have already pointed out that the great want of the present day is some extended organisation by which young girls could

be trained for household duties. Once established and fairly set in working order, such an organisation would, under able management, soon make its influence felt in the Metropolis, and its example be followed in country towns where branch Societies would be established, which might derive certain advantages from affiliative association with the parent organisation. Some modification in the nature of the work done, and in the rules and regulations in force at the latter, might be necessary in the case of branch Societies, the rules and regulations of which should be adapted to meet the special requirements of each district.

Leaving the task of formulating a plan for establishing a Metropolitan organisation to the residents in London, it may not be out of place here to attempt a brief though imperfect sketch of the organisation of a Society such as we hope to see at some future day established throughout the country. We will begin by appointing a managing Committee, composed of ladies and gentlemen, and by laying down the wholesome fundamental principle that our Society shall be self-supporting. Perhaps it is too much to expect that our intentions will be realised directly; but our aim should be to make the Society self-supporting. Our rules and regulations—to be amended and improved, as wisdom and expediency may suggest—might for the present take something like the following shape, namely—

1. Members of the Society to be composed of girls who are candidates for domestic service, and girls who are already in service. Before being admitted as members, girls are to satisfy the Committee that they are honest, sober, and of good moral character—qualities essential to membership. A small entrance fee and annual subscription to be charged. Age of members on entrance, and the amount of fee and subscription, to be determined by the Committee.

2. With the object of promoting habits of providence and thrift, each member shall, on joining the Society, be expected, or even required to become a depositor in a savings-bank, and continue so during membership.

3. One year's unbroken service in her first, or failing that, in her second situation, with a good character from her mistress, shall entitle the member to an official certificate of character. The service to date from membership.

4. Two years' continuous service in her situation, dating from membership, with a good character from her mistress, shall entitle the member to a good-conduct certificate. This certificate to constitute a recommendation to situations where higher wages are given, and to be issued by the Committee.

5. Three years' continuous service in her situation, dating from membership, with a good character from her mistress, shall entitle the member to a first-class certificate of merit, in which may be inserted any special qualifications or recommendations applicable to her case. This certificate to be issued by the parent Society in London, and to constitute a recommendation for superior or first-class situations in the country.

6. Facilities shall be afforded to members in situations to attend at half-price—with the sanction of their mistresses—lectures or enter-

tainments of an instructive and elevating character: a limited number of tickets to be issued from time to time, as the Committee may determine.

7. A Servants' Register shall be kept, in which entries are to be made of the names and ages of (1) members who have not yet been out to service, and are eligible; (2) members who have served one year in a situation; (3) certificated members who have been in service for two years and upwards; (4) members who wish to avail themselves of the instruction and training afforded at the parent Society, with a view to obtaining situations in London; and (5) the names of ladies in the town and neighbourhood requiring servants.

8. Arrangements for interviewing servants to be made on certain days.

9. Registration fees to be charged as determined by the Committee.

It may be urged, and not without reason, that large sums of money, and possibly much labour, would be necessary in order to establish and carry on an organisation of this character. But nothing of this nature is free from trouble and expense; and if these were found to be fruitful of good results, it need hardly be said that the organisers might be considered as amply rewarded.

W O N.

She was so young and fair,
I could not choose but love her. At her feet
I laid my heart and life—an offering meet.

And when with sweet assent
She let me kiss her trembling lips divine,
I thought that none could part us—she was mine!

Alas, poor hope! Stern words
From sterner parent came: 'I cannot yield;
Go thou and fight in Life's great battlefield.'

'Fresh laurels win. When rings
Our land from east to west with thy great fame,
Come then and ask me may she bear thy name?'

With weary hearts and sad,
Beneath the summer stars we bid good-bye,
And vowed to love, through weal or woe, for aye!

Year after year passed on,
And yet, alas! still flowed the changing sea
Between my heart's desire—my life's one love—and me.

At last, with willing feet
And glad, I homeward turned. My task was done.
Once more within my arms I held her—won!

White-robed, like angel pure,
She came—my bride—to gladden all my life.
I cried: 'They cannot part us now, sweet wife.'

The joy-bells rung o'erhead,
The birds sung on, as hand in hand we passed
Into a strange sweet life—love-crowned at last.

GARRADORE.

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NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND THEIR WORK.

NEWSPAPER editors are personages with whom, in the mind of the public at large, there has always been associated a certain degree of mystery. There is no class of men whose work passes so directly and so constantly before the public eye; yet there are few with regard to whose real position and functions more vague, confused, or erroneous notions are entertained, even on the part of persons otherwise well informed. This is no doubt largely due to the anonymity which is preserved in the newspaper press of this country. Readers come to identify the opinions of a particular organ more with the sheet of printed paper, and with its distinctive name and features, than with the individual or individuals by whom it is directed, and of whom, it may be, they know nothing.

The power and influence, with their attendant responsibility, exercised by the editors of our great newspapers, are enormous. Thomas Carlyle once described journalists as the true kings and priests of the nation. The office so described is a most attractive one for young men in search of a career, especially if they be fairly educated, and believe they are imbued with the fire of genius. The commonest mistake of such aspirants to the editorial chair is that they greatly under-estimate the attainments requisite for such a position. They speak of 'taking to journalism,' as if it were a very simple matter, to be accomplished without much personal trouble or inconvenience, and never thinking of the long years of patient work and varied experience which will have to be undergone before they can reach the point they have in view. Journalism is now, and is becoming more so every year, a profession for which a special training is required. There have been instances in which men of brilliant parts and profound erudition have proved signal failures in the editorial chair; while men of inferior education and meaner intellectual powers, but with those indispensable

qualifications—tact, judgment, and experience—have succeeded admirably under the same conditions. It is, therefore, quite erroneous for a young man to suppose that because he has had the advantage of a good education, writes with facility, and has a notion of such work, he can 'take to journalism' and surmount all difficulties, as it were with a pair of seven-league boots.

Some years ago, a young man wrote to an American paper that he wanted to be an editor; and the reply which he received is well worth reproducing here. 'Canst thou,' asked the editor, 'draw up leviathan with an hook thou lettest down? Canst thou hook up great ideas from the depths of thine intellect, and clean, scale, and fry them at five minutes' notice? Canst thou write editorials to measure? Canst thou write an editorial to fit in a three-quarter column of the paper, which shall be in length just twenty-two inches, having three inches of fine sentiment, four inches for the beginning, and nine inches of humour in the middle, and an outburst of maxim and precept, six inches long, at the close?'

This will of course be regarded as a bit of facetious exaggeration on the part of the editor, and no doubt it was; but it really reflects certain necessary phases in the work of a journalist. Important intelligence frequently arrives at the newspaper office within a short time of the paper going to press, and if the editor wishes to be up-to-date or ahead of his contemporaries, as most editors do, he must have a leading article on the subject in the same issue as that in which the news appears. There is not a moment to be lost; indeed, there may be scarcely time to perform the mere mechanical operation of writing what has to be said, not to speak of hunting about for an idea, an appropriate quotation, or a choice form of expression. These must all, in the language of the American editor, be hooked up, cleaned, scaled, and fried without delay.

Most leading newspapers have one or more political articles in each issue, and these, while parliament is sitting, often deal with the previous night's proceedings in the House of Commons. It

frequently happens, however, that the Cabinet minister whose speech is to be commented upon does not rise till the night is far advanced, or it may be that the division which is to determine the whole drift and tone of the article does not take place till one or two in the morning. In the former case, the speech has to be reported, transcribed from shorthand into longhand, and despatched to the various newspaper offices—by telegraph, of course, in the case of provincial papers—the respective editors meanwhile fretting and fuming over the delay which is keeping back from them the material upon which their principal leader is to be based. In such emergencies, an experienced journalist may construct a considerable portion of his leader by anticipation. To use a slang expression, he 'knows the ropes.' He is familiar with the subject, can form a pretty shrewd idea of what the minister is likely to say, may even have had some private hint on the question from official quarters; and leaving to the last his more particular references to the speech of the evening, successfully accomplishes his task. This, however, is a kind of sharp practice which cannot always be indulged in with safety or convenience.

Some editors who possess great facility in composition, employ a shorthand amanuensis, to whom they dictate their leading articles and reviews. In an emergency such as that we have described, or on any occasion when time presses, the editor would dictate to his amanuensis a portion of his leader, writing the remainder himself while the first half was being transcribed from shorthand into printer's 'copy.' The editor's work is not, of course, always done at this high pressure, which would soon wear out the mental and bodily powers of any man. Nor is the ability to turn out good work thus rapidly all that is required of the successful journalist. Upon the editor of a large daily paper devolves the direction and oversight of a complex system, which, properly conducted, produces what may justly be described as one of the marvels of the nineteenth century, but which, if badly or injudiciously managed, would soon involve its promoters in financial ruin.

Of some of the difficulties against which the editor has to contend, none but practical newspaper-men have any conception. Take, for example, the question of space. It is a common fallacy among the general public that it must be a very difficult matter to find news to fill each day's paper. So far from this being the case, the ingenuity of editors and sub-editors is continually on the stretch to find space for even a selection of the most important news at their disposal. In the office of a leading daily newspaper, there is often more matter thrown into the waste-basket, or struck out of manuscripts, than would suffice to fill the paper; while interesting telegrams, for which not only the Post-office, but the correspondents who have sent

them, will have to be paid, are consigned to the same receptacle almost every night, simply because it is impossible to find a corner for them. The calculations of the editor, moreover, are liable to be upset in a hundred different ways. Some great crisis, storm, crime, or disaster occurs, or an important debate suddenly arises in parliament, or some great man dies, or there is an extraordinary and unexpected influx of advertisements—perhaps a combination of these—and all the arrangements of the office are correspondingly disturbed.

An entirely different set of difficulties and dangers beset the editor from without, and to meet these, no little tact and discernment, as well as an extensive knowledge of men and things, are necessary. The acquaintance, or at all events, the favour of a man in whom so much power is vested, is naturally courted by public and official personages in almost every order of social and political life; and not by these alone, but by a still larger constituency of busy-bodies and adventurers—place-hunters, men with hobbies, men with inventions, philanthropists, reformers, literary and poetic aspirants; men indeed—and women sometimes as well—of every class, whose purposes and interests can be promoted in any way by 'favourable mention' in the paper. Only a small proportion of these appeals elicit any favourable response on the part of the judicious editor, who knows that he must exercise the utmost vigilance to escape the snares which are laid for him by those self-seekers.

Though these competitors for favour are a great bore to the editor, their anxiety to stand well with him is occasionally the means of his procuring valuable information which he could not otherwise obtain. It is to them he is often indebted for communications as to the proceedings of private meetings and 'close' corporations. It is owing to their propitiatory offerings that he is now and then enabled to burst a bomb-shell in the camp of his political opponents, by disclosing their secret machinations, and explaining all the details of their little schemes. It is through them that he is sometimes enabled to expose, to the derision of an amused and edified public, the intrigues of official and municipal life.

But what kind of people are editors personally, when the mysterious curtain which hides them from the public gaze has been drawn aside? The question is one to which no specific answer can be given, for a more heterogeneous class of men does not exist anywhere. The diversity observable in the newspapers which issue from the press daily, weekly, or otherwise, is nothing to that which exists among those who direct them. If all the editors of newspapers published, say, in the English language were brought together in one vast assemblage, they would form a curious gathering, not the least remarkable feature of which would be its heterogeneous composition.

In such an assemblage, it would be interesting to pick out the comparatively few who may be regarded as having reached the very top of their profession, who conduct the most powerful organs of public opinion, who enjoy the confidence and friendship of the greatest statesmen

of the day, and who move in the highest literary and artistic circles. After them, we might perhaps be able to recognise a few of the more notable among a much larger number, who, though stars of lesser magnitude as compared with those in the first rank, enjoy a very considerable share of honourable distinction, and who, both personally and professionally, exercise an influence which is neither dubious nor circumscribed. We should then have to contemplate the most numerous class of all, who may be described as the rank and file of our great editorial army, composed of men who, though perhaps but little known or recognised beyond their own particular sphere, are doing good and admirable work, and who, only within a more limited radius and in more localised affairs, exercise an influence little less than that of their more distinguished brethren.

Last of all, we should be curiously interested in a considerable number who, hanging on, as it were, to the outskirts of the concourse, may be said to belong to a somewhat nondescript class, each section of which is made up of men of the most opposite views, acquirements, and methods, carrying on their operations under the most diverse conditions. Yet there is this most interesting feature to be noticed, that though in each of these various sections we find men who have reached the limit of their possibilities, and some who have at one time held higher rank in their profession than it is now their lot to fill, there are at the same time to be found in each, even the lowest grade, men who may yet aspire to the highest, and in the highest, men who have risen from the lowest. This is no doubt true of almost every profession; but the fact has this peculiar significance in regard to journalistic work, that steady and sustained promotion can never be the outcome of anything apart from genuine worth and efficiency.

There is no profession in which a man stands more supremely on his merits than in that of journalism. In many others, promotion is more a question of influence, of good fortune, or of time, than of actual working capacity. In journalism, influence goes for little or nothing, unless there be on the part of the aspirant real efficiency to perform the work that has to be done. There never was greater competition in the press than there is at the present day, and that competition is more likely to become keener than to diminish. It is becoming more and more a question of the survival of the fittest, and special eminence is ever more difficult to attain. The incompetent and inexperienced, therefore, must inevitably go to the wall.

We have said that there are men now occupying the highest ranks of the journalistic profession who have risen from the lowest. As illustrating the various stages of such promotion, it may not be out of place to mention a case in point. We could name the editor of one of the most powerful daily newspapers published in the United Kingdom who began life as a lad on the bottom-most round of the ladder—in the printing office; who, by his own unaided industry and perseverance, entered, through various stages of preferment, upon the work of reporting, and passed from one grade to another in that department, till, after a wide experience of provincial and general work, he reached what is in many respects the most im-

portant sphere in which that arduous calling is exercised—that of parliamentary reporting; and who, throughout an extended experience in the Gallery of the House of Commons, acquired a knowledge of political affairs, of the relations of parties and of statesmen, and of the intricacies of parliamentary procedure, which must have proved invaluable to him in the subsequent periods of his career. The remaining stages of sub-editorial and editorial work were duly passed through, and his present position attained. The majority of our most successful journalists are self-made men.

The press is every year becoming a greater power in the land; it is already one of the greatest 'resources of civilisation,' and we might as soon try to get along without steam, or railways, or the post-office, as without our newspapers. If we are to have newspapers, we must have editors to direct them, and the editors must march with or in advance of the times. There is therefore good reason to hope that better things are in store for the coming generations of journalists than there have been for those that are gone, and that on the newspaper press the best talent, the maturest judgment, and the most cultivated taste will yet find congenial and appropriate work.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—AND NOW HE BEGAN TO KNOW HOW FUTILE HIS DISHONESTY WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN HAD HE SUCCEEDED.

OVER London a dull gray sky, obscuring the last sun that shines this month of May. Over Lumby Hall a leaden sky that weeps and weeps; and round about it, a maudlin wind that moans. In London City, beneath that dull gray sky, the great House of Lumby and Lumby once more flourishes, and lifts a head the prouder for defeated shame. In Lumby Hall there are hearts that beat in answer to the City triumph, and throb with sweeter and more human joys; for in Lumby Hall there is this great joy, that the master of the house, long stunned by terrible calamity, is beginning to know the forms and faces round him and to remember names.

You who are old, and have lived your lives, and bred your children to usefulness and honour, do you remember any happier times than those when your children began to know you, and to reach out chubby arms for you, and to make lingual stumbles over 'father' or 'mother'? None sweeter, I dare answer for you. Yet in this house was a still deeper and more sacred joy; for the head of it was coming out of a dreadful dream of childhood, that had been renewed too early; the brain that once had concocted great schemes, was again active; the weak heart that had led large enterprises, was once more beginning to pulsate aright. He was coming back slowly to conscious life, and would by-and-by hear glad tidings—as though some mariner who had suffered utter shipwreck should wake to find his good craft whole again, and the drowned comrade's hand holding his with the grasp of friendship.

Wailing wind and clouded sky around and over Lumby Hall; and such gay and tender

hearts within it. Low-lying skies above the great refurbished house of Lumby and Lumby in the City. Strike fast, free wings, and bear us on. The British Channel gray and misty; the coast of France with a glint of sunlight on it; the fields of France bright with broad sunshine, and many a cornfield waving in the wind. On southward and westward, till we pass the awful hills, and hover beneath a blazing sun and in the burning summer air of Spain. And southward now to Cadiz, where we drop, swooping downward with sure flight to strike our fancied quarry—Garling!

Garling on the shady side of a narrow street, walking with bent head and hands behind him as of old, looking an incarnate secret here, as in London City half a year ago—Garling self-banished, with all his wicked schemes foiled and broken, and his heart broken with his schemes—Garling among his ghosts again.

'Do you love me well enough to trust me?'

'I have no words to tell you how I love you.'

Then a chamber with a dying woman in it, and a cheap clock hurrying on the time and stumbling in its haste to get the horror over. Then a dream-journey by cab and rail and sea. Then a real journey by cab renewing the dream-journey; a railway station filled with hurrying crowds, faces showing here and there in the gas-light, and lost here and there in the gloom; a platform almost deserted; a green light turning a sudden eye upon it; a lamp swinging; a whistle sounding; a hand upon his arm, and a heart which seems for a second as though it ceased to beat. His own. If it would but cease to beat! If it would but cease!

Lost—all lost. The game played quite in vain. Familiar voices in the street laugh at the lost gamester—familiar faces smile derisively. He hears the voices—'When did ever villainy thrive? There is a fate in these things.' He reads the meaning of the smile. 'We were fools enough to believe this shallow fellow a financial genius.' Is it bitter? Is wormwood bitter? He would rather live on wormwood than face that smile. And it mocks him always, awake and in his dreams, and there is no escape from it.

A night at sea, with a moon struggling to pierce a bank of clouds; the sea crying with waste voices. The game played out, and played in vain. A figure on the deck of a ship which floats a black hulk on the waste gray heaving waters—a figure with bent head and hands folded behind him, ghost-tormented. Garling, in this lonely narrow Cadiz street, walks with bent head and hands folded behind him, and knows that figure on the ship's deck and knows the ghosts that haunt him. He knows the figure, flying with false passport for the swindler's refuge, Spain. 'EDWIN MARTIAL, aged 49, height 5 ft. 6 in., complexion sallow;' and so on, and so on. He has that phantom's passport in his pocket. He sees the gray ghost landing at the quay; he sees him taking lodgings, walking the streets of Cadiz day by day, eating his phantom heart out as he goes. Then in fancy the ghost shoulders him, and as it were melts into him, and he and the ghost are one. He and the ghost walk on together to a café in a by-street, and go in together.

Years before, when the cashier first meditated on his crime, he had begun to qualify himself for a residence in Spain. There is but little pleasure to be got in any foreign country if you are a resident there, cut off from communion with your own countrymen, unless you know the language spoken by the people round about you. Garling was not a common villain, and had set to work, having once made up his mind to flee to Spain, to learn Spanish. It is not a difficult language; and though he spoke it like a stranger, he learned to read and write it as glibly and correctly as his mother-tongue. But though he was not a common villain, and though his majestic plot had been wrecked by chance, and not by any fault inherent in it, he had fallen into the one curious blunder of fancying that perpetual leisure would bring with it unrestricted pleasures. Well, he had got perpetual leisure, and it was gall. The bare fact that he was without employment crushed him. He had lived plainly, though to his very heart a gourmet, promising himself the pleasures of the table. He was not so poor even now, with the honest savings of his lifetime, that he could not command those pleasures, and he had no joy in them. He had loved good wine, and though holding himself back from it, had lusted after it. It had lost its flavour and its sparkle. It did but upset his Spartan stomach and make his head ache. He had lived for the World and the Flesh, and he was here surrendered to the Devil; and the world was empty and ashen and gray; the joys of the world were years and years behind him.

And now he began to know how futile his dishonesty would have been even had he succeeded, and he groaned inwardly many a time, and acknowledged the truth of that base but salutary proverb which says that honesty is the best policy. He began to feel the proverb base as well as true, for a plain reason. It is but a poor reason to be honest—that it pays. Honesty has a better plea than that. It is honest, whether it be a good policy or not. And so this able scoundrel—this swindler of genius—was crushed before the last blow fell upon him. And here and now the last blow was to fall.

Spain is not an advanced country, and has done her best or her worst to sweep the tide of human progress back from her shores. Spain is the staunch old uncompromising Tory among nations. Yet even Spain could not shut out that glorified and benighted Paul Pry we name 'the press.' She could fetter Paul. But for once in a way he brought the truth home, and struck it deep to the heart of a remorseful, but not yet repentant, villain; for Garling took up from the marble-topped sloppy little table in his café a Spanish journal, and therein read this narrative. Paul had garbled the story a little, as you will see, but he was right in the main.

'A singular romance has just transacted itself in London. The last chapter of this romance reserved itself for Madrid, and is therefore of especial interest for our readers. The great company of Lombardo Brothers, who probably take their name from Lombardo Street, the great

banking quarter of England, was lately compelled to suspend payment. For more than twenty years the affairs of the Company were conducted by One Garling. The name and the persistent character of the criminal alike point to Scandinavia as his birthplace. One Garling was a gentleman of the loftiest repute, and was chancellor of the City Exchequer. He was completely trusted by the Company and was believed to conduct their affairs with unequalled skill and probity; but in reality he was a criminal of daring genius. During the whole of the time for which he was intrusted with the conduct of affairs, he was engaged in the elaboration of a scheme for the ruin of his employers, a plot to which he appears to have been stimulated by a hatred of the City institutions. The result of defalcations spread over a long series of years, amounting to twenty-five millions of reals, was deposited at Madrid, and One Garling himself escaped to this country. It now transpires, however, from the statement of the English journals, that he was detected before his flight and compelled to sign a confession of his misdeeds, by Sir Lombardo, the head of the City Company. Sir Lombardo also succeeded in extorting from One Garling a complete restitution of the stolen moneys. But now begins the romance of the story. Sir Lombardo, who is presumably old and frail, was so affected by the emotion of the time, that he lost his reason, and having mislaid the drafts, he allowed the City Company to become ruined.

Garling dropped the paper on the little marble-topped table, and stared before him with a ghastly face. He saw already that he had a second time missed his prize. He took up the paper and read on.

The establishment was therefore declared bankrupt, and its properties were seized by the law officers. The books containing the accounts of the association were sold for waste-paper; and in one of them, the confession of One Garling, and the drafts made by him upon the Spanish Bank at Madrid, were miraculously discovered. Application was immediately made to the Madrid authorities, and it was discovered that in spite of all his cunning, Mr One Garling had allowed the money to rest in their hands. It was therefore withdrawn by the authority of the miraculously-recovered drafts, and the City Company is thus re-established. It is seldom—And the Spanish Paul glided from history to morality, and preached the natural sermon.

Garling read on steadfastly to the end. With that marvellous fatuity which attends and produces crime not yet crushed out of him, his spirit writhed in incredible bitterness under this final misfortune. Since his flight, he had never until now taken up a newspaper. He had supposed that as a matter of course the merchant had communicated with the Madrid Bankers long before he himself had set a foot in Spain, and now he found that the money had been still lying at his call until within a few days ago. He had told himself a thousand times since his exile from England, that money was valueless to him. He had discovered beyond any chance of denial that the time for such enjoyments as he had promised himself had gone by—that his appetites were effete, that the life he had led in London had

so moulded him that his leisure was an agony, and his heaping up of money the foolishness of all possible blunders. And yet he writhed in spirit at what he read. He was Fate's fool, it seemed, he who had thought himself so cunning. Cunning? The man's belief in himself crumbled. Where were the fertility of resource, the unshaken constancy to self which he had boasted all these years?

He felt a singular curiosity to know how long a time had elapsed between the loss and the recovery of the drafts. He sat for an hour, thrumming on the table, with bent head, seeing nothing that went on about him, and scarcely thinking. Nobody to look at him would have supposed that any very dreadful trouble weighed upon him. Trained so long to impassivity, his face kept a fair copy of its usual expression, and he passed for an idle gentleman whiling away the time in mere reverie. But the curiosity he felt drew him to the Spanish Paul. He paid for his coffee, inquired his way to the office of the journal in which he had read the news, and in due time reached it. Señor Parria, a courteous-mannered gentleman, received him. Garling explained his mission. He was Mr Edwin Martial, an Englishman, having business in Cadiz, and for the present residing there. He had had transactions with the great House, and had known Mr Garling. Perhaps his curiosity as to the authenticity of the story might be pardoned. Assuredly, replied the swarthy Señor. The facts as related had appeared in a journal published in the Spanish capital. Since then, the English mail, by some cause delayed a day, had brought the English journals to Cadiz. The swarthy Señor regretted that he himself did not read English, but—would the inquirer care to search the papers, and if need be, go back on the foreign file and discover any reference to the story? Mr Edwin Martial was obliged. He declined the cigarette proffered by the courteous editor; he sat down with his hat on the floor beside him, and looked through the file of a London daily preserved for the past three months. There he made out the whole of the story. He saw himself denounced in a slashing leader as the Prince of Modern Swindlers. The lash of the virtuous leader-writer's indignation fell harmlessly upon him. The eulogy of his artifice brought him no comfort. He saw of course through all the guesses the virtuous leader-writer made, and passed on calmly to search for the next article. For two or three days he made a figure in the world's news, and then he dropped out of it for five or six weeks. Then he came back again with a burst, and for another day or two he made the most interesting item in journalistic intelligence. The leader-writer was at him again, and rejoicingly denounced him as the Prince of Modern Dullards. He brought his leader to its proper length by an affecting eulogium upon the virtue of honesty, and the paying properties of that attribute; and he pictured with considerable pathos, the restoration of British Mercantile Honour to its old place in the confidence of the trading communities of the world.

Garling read everything he could find, and the courteous editor cast an eye upon him now and again, and never made the remotest guess as to his identity. It was natural enough that any British mercantile person should be interested

in the details of this remarkable business story. The courteous editor himself was interested in it, and questioned his guest as to the result of his readings when he arose to go. With colossal imperturbability the guest replied; with splendid quietude of demeanour, bowed himself out stiffly and like an Englishman, and so went home.

When fiends left the bodies of their human victims at the bidding of exorcists, they tore their habitations. Were the fiends Avarice and Greed preparing to leave Garling that they tore him so? To an old criminal, repentance must needs be an awful thing. Had it begun to come to that with him? The sunlight ruled broad dazzling lines upon the wall, and he sat in shadow and looked at them as they slowly, slowly moved. Gray and stern and cold he sat there, and again his ghosts were with him. What a life! To have these grim and terrible monitors for his sole companions. Well, there was business and its old attractions left him. He had money enough to start the world with, and he would heap a bigger fortune together by honest work than his foolish fraud had cost him. A blunder! a huge blunder! Wipe the record out, and begin again. Start life anew. Why not, with five thousand pounds to begin with? There is a Bourse in Cadiz, and the city is one of the homes of European commerce. So he set his ghosts behind him and beat his remorse down, and rose for the moment a conqueror. No gesture proclaimed his victory; but his cheek flushed a little and his sunken eyes gleamed and his fingers trembled.

He began that very day to prepare for his new enterprise, and as he did so he felt his spirit reviving, and the old resolution filled his heart again. 'No man shall say the reverses I have suffered broke me down,' he said; 'I will make a new name, which shall outshine the old one.' He began with caution, and thrust his whole soul into the enterprise, so that howsoever the ghosts might batter at the gates and moan outside, they should find no entrance. He had not been at work a week before he found that he was known and recognised in spite of his *alias*. Not a soul would trust his bond a moment, and his operations were restricted to the limits of his capital. He did not quail at this or at anything, but went on doggedly; and with keen eye and resolute heart pursued his purpose. For a while it prospered, and it became the fashion among speculators to watch him, and where they could discover his financial movements, to follow him. It did not pay him to be followed, and to have the mob with him, and so he worked underground as it were, and grew more secret than ever. But it was impossible even for Garling to work without tools, and he found a tool in a certain Koulo, by descent a Levantine polyglot, with no man knows how many nationalities mingling in his veins. There was some Greek blood in him, as his name seemed to indicate, and some Hebrew strain also, as his nose and lips sufficiently testified. It is not probable that there was in his day a meaner dog in Cadiz. He had been trained for the law, but was universally distrusted, and so had no practice of any sort, and was forced to live by his disreputable wits. Garling worked through this man without seeming to have any association with

him, and thus leaving the mob behind, began to thrive mightily. Garling read character, and trusted Señor Koulo with not one farthing for an instant.

The Señor knew little of his employer's affairs; but he learned enough to know on one occasion that Garling must necessarily have a considerable amount of money by him, waiting for deposit on the morrow. He was a tall broad-shouldered fellow, not unhandsome in his own coarse way, but marred by signs of dissipation. He was a dull dog, and he knew it; but though he was no match for Garling intellectually, he knew himself a match and more than a match for him physically. And so it befell that the fraudulent cashier experienced in turn the miseries he had inflicted upon another. The Señor swaggering in under cover of the darkness on pretence of having some business news to communicate, sat down and began a rambling disconnected tale. He had been drinking to screw his courage to the sticking-point, and had so far overdone it, that his employer discerned the signs of drink upon him, and sternly bade him go. This command, with many *crambos* and *c'rajos*, the swaggering Señor resented, and Garling renewing his injunction turned his back upon him, and in that moment received a blow which stretched him senseless upon the floor. Then suddenly pallid and shaky, the wicked Polyglot searched his employer's body, found his keys, shakily opened his cash-box, with trembling hands abstracted its contents, opened his safe and renewed the thievish procedure there, and then with trembling legs betook himself down-stairs. He disappeared from Cadiz and was believed to have transferred himself to London. He was said to have been seen in gorgeous raiment in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square, where of course he was a patriot and a man of family, shamefully exiled on account of the purity of his political principles.

It took Garling weeks to recover from the physical effects of the wicked Polyglot's violence. Even when he got about again, he felt the old indomitable spirit gone. His nerves never recovered from the shock they had suffered, and at times his mind was clouded. No man pitied his misfortune, and though that seemed to make little difference to him, he felt it. He gradually sank back from the life upon which he had set himself, banked what was left of his money, and lived narrowly upon its interest. Being thus thrown upon himself, he found the ghosts that haunted him more numerous and more terrible. The darkness gathered about him, thicker and thicker, and there were awful faces and voices in it. He began to see truly how base his life had been, and spiritual terrors opened on him. Into the gloomy valley in which his days were spent, how shall we dare to follow him? A great man thrown away! The capacities for a great career wasted, and worse than wasted! He used to murmur sometimes a mournful excerpt from what, in his reading days, had been his favourite play: 'There is no creature loves me; and when I die, no soul will pity me!'

Leave him. Come away from where he sits, with the shadows of a hard and wicked life gathering deeply round him. Leave him—with

puty—if you may. We shall see him but once again before the last Shadow which waits for all shall fold him—

That Shadow, waiting with the keys,
To shroud him from his proper scorn.

JOTTINGS FROM ANIMAL LIFE.

For some short time before his death, the late Mr Frank Buckland had been arranging, with a view to publication in a collected form, the most important of his many interesting papers on pisciculture and the habits of animals, which during the last few years of his life he had contributed to the pages of *Land and Water*. These papers are now offered to the public in a neat octavo volume, published by Messrs Smith, Elder, & Co., and bearing the title, *Notes and Jottings from Animal Life*.

While a certain melancholy attaches to these papers, as being probably the last that we shall see from Frank Buckland's pen, yet the reader, forgetting this, soon finds himself carried along from page to page, charmed by the ease and kindly good-humour with which the author describes the habits of his many curious pets. The leading chapter on Monkeys is well adapted to bring out the quaint touches of humour which distinguish the author's descriptions of animal life; the subject being graced by many of those picturesque anecdotes which none could relate better than he. As a specimen of the book, the following may be given on the odd subject of Tame Rats:

'I have for the last twenty years never been without a tame rat. The "monkey-room" is the general refuge for the sick animals belonging to my friends, and lucky are those animals who come into this hospital. I almost forget where the rat I am writing about came from. I believe he was one I rescued from an untimely end by being swallowed by the ant-eater at the Zoological Gardens. This rat has the bump of curiosity strongly developed, and nothing pleases him so much as to make an inspection of my writing-table. He creeps cautiously about, and examines everything, his object being to steal. What he likes best is lump-sugar. My sugar-basin originally cost a penny; like the Portland Vase, it has been smashed and broken so often that it is impossible to estimate its present value. The cause of these numerous fractures is the rat, who, when he wants a bit of sugar, stands up on his hind-legs, supporting himself with his tail in a tripod-like fashion, and upsets the sugar-basin; then selecting a lump, he bolts with it. It is a remarkable fact that the rat never eats in the open; he takes all he steals back to his house. In order to do this, he has to get on to the mantel-piece, which is about eighteen inches above the writing-table. To enable him to accomplish this, I have put up for him a rat-ladder, built somewhat on the lines of a salmon-ladder. After I had shown him once or twice how to get up this ladder, he very soon learned what he had to do. I have known him scramble up his ladder with objects which for a rat must be of considerable weight. One day I saw him steal a whole red herring. Having tried the best way to carry it, he ultimately picked it up at the right point where it balanced. When he arrived at the round

hole which leads to the sleeping compartment of the squirrels' cage, he was pulled up short by the herring, which was crossways in his mouth. I was curious to see what he would do. He dropped the herring, and seemed to consider. Having quickly made up his mind, he adopted the following plan. Leaving the herring outside, he went into the hole, and turning short round, seized it by the head, and hauled it in with the greatest ease. The muscles about the neck of the rat are very strong, giving him great power to use his wedge-shaped head whether for boring or carrying. He uses his tail to steer himself, and when climbing, works it as a rope-dancer works his balancing-pole.

'The rat is a great stealer of bits of paper, and any loose pieces he can find, he carries away. When the post comes in, in the morning, therefore, the rat has the envelopes as a perquisite. These he tears into little bits, and makes a very comfortable nest with them.'

Mr Buckland devotes a portion of two chapters to an explanation of the process of salmon-spawning and the procuring of eggs for exportation; and in the account of his adventures, while collecting eggs in the North Tyne for transportation to New Zealand, he points out the many difficulties of the task, and the care required in handling the female salmon from which the eggs are about to be ejected. These chapters are interspersed with fishing lore and many capital anecdotes.

In a paper upon Otters, the author relates some of his experiences of these animals, several live specimens of which had from time to time come into his possession. One specimen, which Mr Buckland purchased in 1875, became comparatively tame, and was afterwards sent to the Westminster Aquarium, where naturalists had an opportunity of studying at leisure its interesting habits. After giving an account of the structure of the otter, and the wonderful facility with which he captures his prey under water, the author says: 'I have described, when writing of the anatomy of the guillemot, the wonderful bubbles of air that invariably follow that bird when under water, and I have explained how the air is stored underneath the feathers, and given out when the bird is diving. In the otter, a somewhat similar phenomenon can be observed. As he swims along under water, he is followed by a train of the most lovely air-bubbles, which appear exactly like beads of quicksilver. The origin of this air I cannot quite make out. A large proportion of it comes directly from the lungs. This is important; the otter evidently has some difficulty in sinking in the water—he therefore lets out the air to enable him to go down; but at the same time a good deal of air comes from underneath the fur. When the seal dives, no air appears to come from underneath his coat.'

'The otter, it has been remarked, always takes the largest fish in the tank first, leaving the smallest fish till the last. He never attempts to eat them under water, but always comes to the bank-side to have his meal. The otter invariably begins to eat the fish by crunching up the head, never the tail; holding his prey by his forepaws, so that it has not the least chance of escape, and munching it into very small bits. I have prepared the skull, and find that the canine teeth are very trenchant, and almost scissor-like in their action;

they are conical in shape, much sharper than the canines of a dog or cat. When a fish is caught, the otter immediately transfixes it through the head with his sharp canines, the action of which is such that the fish is held by them as in a rabbit-trap, and cannot escape. The otter holds the fish for some little time between the canines before he begins to eat, waiting till it is quite dead and quiet. In eating, he never uses his canines at all, but bites at the fish with the side of the mouth only. The molars and premolars are also very sharp, but capable of crushing any substance into very small bits.

While engaged upon the Herring Commission Inquiry, Mr Buckland made a voyage to the north in H.M.S. *Jackal*, and he gives a graphic description of his experiences while visiting Orkney and Shetland, together with Fair Island. The last-named island seems to be a general rendezvous for many of the sea-fowl which migrate to and from the far north. 'The common and Black-backed gull and the Kittiwake are here the whole year, but are much more numerous during the breeding season than at any other time. The eider-duck, the guillemot, the puffin, and sheldrake come about the middle of April, and remain till October. The puffin and guillemot seem by general consent to have fixed on the 12th of August as the day of their departure. Thousands may be seen a day or two before that date, but only a few solitary birds after it. The black guillemot remains here the whole year. The gannet and fulmar come after the breeding season. The stormy petrels breed here; but though their young are frequently seen, the nests are rarely if ever found. Swans and many different kinds of geese visit the island yearly for a few days in spring and the beginning of winter. Both kinds of cormorants are found here the whole year round; they often drift ashore in considerable numbers, dead or very much weather-beaten, during long-continued storms.'

Frank Buckland was great at shows, and seldom lost an opportunity of visiting them. Being in Yarmouth on business, 'of course,' he says, 'I went to the shows, where the best thing by far was the Hairless Horse. Yes, he was perfectly hairless, as bald as a billiard ball. His hair had not been shaved; he had never had any. Some part of the skin was white, the rest black: the white was very white, like the skin of a sucking-pig; the black was the black of the edible Chinese dog, also called the "India-rubber dog." There was also on view a "Living Skeleton"—certainly a skeleton something awful to look at. He was said to be thirty-four; he might have been any age. He was awfully thin. His wrist would pass through a gauge of one inch and one-eighth. I asked the skeleton what he lived on. He said: "Rump-steaks and porter." Anyhow, he certainly did not grow fat on it. I went also to see a "Petrified Mummy," about which the showman of course had a long yarn to tell. This was an old friend that I am continually coming across at penny shows—namely, the "Abogine." The history of the "Abogine" is as follows: He is a dried Australian native, thrown in as a bargain with some spears, shells, &c., in a lot, and bought by a dealer. The shells, &c., were sold,

but not the dried Australian, and the dealer got quite tired of his bargain. At last he called him an "Abogine," and chopped him to some penny showman for some monkeys. The poor "Abogine" does not get on; showmen can't make money out of him. The "Abogine" of course means "aboriginal native," only the word has been a little twisted.'

In a chapter on the London Birdcatchers, Mr Buckland gives a number of interesting particulars relating to the notes of various songsters. Thus, his friend 'Mr Davy's call-bird goldfinch was a very good one, and Mr Davy put his song into words. By listening attentively, I could make out that the goldfinch did really say the following words. There are two songs of the goldfinch; one is—

Sippat-sippat-slam-slam-slain-siwiddy.

The other is—

Sippat-widdle-widdle-slam-siwiddy-kurr-hurotle-chay.

Goldfinches are now becoming very scarce, because the cultivation of land is exterminating the thistles. At the end of the year, the birds lie up in quiet feeding-places, and remain there as long as the food lasts; they will not be seen on flight again until April.

'The song of the wild linnet is thus written by Mr Davy:

Hepo, hepe, hepo, hepe,
Tollaky, tollaky, quakey, wheet,
Heep, pipe, chow,
Heep, tollaky, quakey, wheet,
Lug, orcher, wheet.

'The toy linnet is a bird that has been taught to sing by the titlark, woodlark, or yellow-hammer; they are educated at an immense amount of trouble. The linnet is taught "in-and-in," "in-and-in;" that is, by constant repetition; and only a very few take the perfect song. The song begins thus:

Pu poy, tollick, tollick, eky quak,
E wheet, tollick, cha syl, quake, wheet.

This is one stave of the song. Then follow in due order the following staves:

Phillip, cha eke, quake, wheet.
Call up, cha eke, quake, wheet.
Tollick, eke, quake, chow.
Eke, eke, eke, quak chow.
Chuck chuck, chay, ter wheet tollick, eke quake,
wheet.
Echup, echup, pipe chow.
Ah, ah, ah! J-o-o.
Eke quake, chow rattle.
Tuck, tuck, wizzy ter wheet;
Tolliky, quake wheet.

This is the finish of the toy linnet song. When the above song is put together by a properly trained bird, it is just like a flute.

'To get these birds to take the song, they must be taken from the nest very young, before they get the call of the parent-birds.

'Perfect toy linnets are worth almost any sum of money; fifteen to twenty pounds would be given readily for a thoroughly good one. Broken song-birds are only worth thirty to fifty shillings each. A broken song-bird will not make his stops in the song as given above; he will run one stave into the other. Good toy linnets are very scarce, and their trainers are getting old and dying off.'

In 1878, the new lion-house at the Zoological Gardens was built, space being left for large outdoor playgrounds for the animals. The transfer of these large carnivora from their old dwelling required great care and a thorough knowledge of the habits of the animals, more especially as they are extremely suspicious, and very frightened at anything having the appearance of a trap. Formerly, the animals were made to move from one den to another by setting fire to some straw, and thus starting them; but in this instance Mr Bartlett preferred to employ stratagem rather than force, and had a strong box constructed called a 'shifting-den,' which was placed opposite the door of the cage. A tempting bit of meat placed between the bars at the far end of the box, eventually induced one of the animals to enter, when an attendant pulled a cord, and the slide fell down, thus making him a prisoner. In this way all the animals were transferred without much trouble to the new house. Singular to say, it was found more difficult to trap those which had been born in menageries and lived all their lives in confinement, than others which had come to the Gardens after being in a wild state. The difficulty of transferring the animals from the indoor dens to the playground was overcome by constructing an iron box, both ends of which could open or shut at will. This box was placed upon wheels, and by means of a tramway, shifted along the wide passage which runs between the dens and the playground, allowing communication between any two of the doors as required.

The carnivora were released for the first time in June 1879, when it was found how well the tunnel plan had answered. The tigers having ascertained that the door at the back of the den was wide open, and apparently communicated with the open air, naturally took advantage of what they thought to be a sure means of escape. The first tiger that went through the tunnel belonged to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. This tiger was a cautious gentleman. He approached the tunnel with the greatest caution, testing its stability with his huge paw at every step. The spectacle of the four tigers coming out into the open was really grand. First, there appeared the head of a tiger; he surveyed everything outside for a minute, and then cautiously came out, creeping along cat-like, without the least noise. It was indeed a beautiful sight to see these lovely gigantic cats, the four tigers, gradually emerge one by one into their new, large, open playground. By a little imagination, one might easily fancy that the scene was situated in the middle of India, and that the tigers were coming out from their fastnesses to seek their food.

When they arrived at the open, it was very beautiful to watch them crouch down, making themselves appear as small as possible. Finding nothing to hurt or alarm them, they curiously examined the trunks of the trees and rockwork placed there for their especial benefit. They trusted to their sense of smell and touch for objects near them, and to their sense of sight for objects distant from them. When the four tigers were loose in their playground, and the door closed behind them, they at once began to play, and very beautiful were their movements as they ran after each other, tumbled, and gambled like young kittens, their coats looking like

satin in the warm sun. All of a sudden, a new and, to them, a most interesting object made its appearance. This was a young and very white zebu calf of a few days old, which came out of its shed in full sight of the cage only a few yards off. The moment the Prince's big tiger saw it, he crouched to the ground, and remained stationary, watching the innocent-looking baby zebu. He was all fixed and statuelike, perfectly motionless except the very tip of his tail, about two inches of which kept jerking from side to side, signifying great anxiety, expectation, and readiness for immediate action. Presently the other three tigers perceived that their comrade had seen something. They also instantly assumed various attitudes of contemplated attack, indicating their intense desire to kill this young zebu calf and eat him. This group of four magnificent tigers, all intent upon one and the same object, was grand in the extreme. It was also very interesting to observe that the mother of the young zebu seemed to know instinctively that her calf was in danger, as she appeared to warn it in her own peculiar way. I left the four tigers still looking at the zebu calf, when we adjourned to watch the lions come out into their playground at the other end of the four large iron cages.

In a paper upon singular accidents to animals, which had come under the author's observation, the most curious is that which occurred to a stag in Windsor Forest. The forefoot of the animal having become fixed in the fork of a tree, possibly while he was searching for food among the lower branches, he was unable to extricate himself; and the limb breaking, he had fallen upon his back, and probably died slowly of hunger.

The efforts of Lord Bute to acclimatise the beaver in the west of Scotland, which have now met with success, are touched upon by the author, who narrates several interesting anecdotes of this most industrious little animal which he noted while upon a visit to Mount Stuart House; a notice of which appeared in our columns several years ago.

Mr Buckland in the course of his book has some amusing notes on the sea-serpent, together with observations on the habits of the manatee, and a valuable chapter on the structure of whales. In speaking of the *Beluga* or white whale, an example of which was lately at the Westminster Aquarium, the author mentions some curious facts in connection with the breathing functions of these immense creatures. After explaining how seals and other lung-breathing animals have the power of remaining under water, he says: 'In the whale we find altogether a different kind of self-acting breathing-valve. The wind-pipe does not communicate with the mouth; a hole is, as it were, bored right through the back of the head. Engineers would do well to copy the action of the valve of the whale's blow-hole; a more perfect piece of structure it is impossible to imagine. Day and night, asleep or awake, the whale works his breathing apparatus in such a manner that not a drop of water ever gets down into the lungs. Again, the whale must of necessity stay a much longer period of time under water than seals; this alone might possibly drown him, inasmuch as the lungs cannot have access to fresh air. We find that this difficulty has been anticipated and obviated by a peculiar reservoir in

the venous system, which reservoir is situated at the back of the lungs.

We will not draw further upon the many interesting topics which Mr Buckland places before his readers, but would recommend the book itself, not only to all lovers of nature, but to the general reader as well.

THE CLIFFORD DIAMONDS.

CHAPTER II.—WHAT WE SAW OF THEM.

WE were not a very pleasant party at breakfast at the Mills House next morning. Uncle's brows were knit. My brother Tom could not conceal his disgust at young Clifford's conduct; and I felt miserable when I thought of Naomi. Yet I had one crumb of comfort—the preference might be all on one side. I had never seen anything in my sister's demeanour to warrant the supposition that her affections were engaged; and then, how could she help a young man's fancy for her? I had just reasoned myself into a quiet frame of mind about her, when uncle announced that he was going to Grange, and that he must have a few minutes' conversation with Clifford. I thought Arthur followed uncle with a very bad grace; and I was not surprised to see the two men issue from the library with set, angry faces.

Surely never was there so slow and weary a morning. The gardens were a good way off, beyond the great mills. I did not care to go there, lest uncle should suddenly return and require me; I could not talk to Arthur Clifford; and I had not the heart to play the piano. As a last resource, I took down a volume of Ruskin, and forgot my worries.

'Olive, I've brought you your letters.' Naomi was standing at my side, with half-a-dozen letters in her hand, looking uncommonly well and bright. 'I've got such a jolly letter from Uncle Hugh,' she went on. 'There is to be a delightful fancy ball in Liverpool next month. He wants us to go as "Night and Morning"—Ruth in very dark blue and silver; and I in pale blue and gold. He says he'll give us our frocks if papa only will let us go.'

'And what does papa say?' I inquired, well pleased that her mind was full of such thoughts.

'Oh, he said he'd think of it; which is, being interpreted, we'll go.'

'Now, Naomi!' I cried, lifting a warning finger.

'Oh, you dear old tabby, I don't mean anything profane, only—Arthur Clifford!' She drew back, looking so white and startled, that I felt startled too.

He came gaily forward, a bright smile on his handsome face, a proud light in his full dark eyes. 'Yes, my dearest girl; just Arthur Clifford, and no one else. Are you not glad to see me?' He extended both his hands and caught hers. 'Have I startled you out of even a word of welcome, Naomi?' he asked.

She recovered herself in a moment. 'Yes,' she said; 'I am surprised. I did not think you would have come so unexpectedly.'

'How could I tell any one I was coming, when I did not know it myself until ten minutes before I left London?' he said.

'And what brought you home?' she asked, gently disengaging her hands.

He made a grimace.

'I suppose you have been going a little too far with one of your numerous flirtations?' Naomi remarked, very coolly.

'Now, I call that horribly unkind of you, Naomi,' exclaimed Clifford in an angry tone. 'I've never had a single flirtation since you told me that you!'

She lifted her hand ever so slightly; but I saw the gesture, and drew my own conclusions. I felt grieved to the soul. These two had been carrying on an underhand courtship.

'I am shocked—shocked and surprised, Naomi,' I said; and like a goose, I began to cry.

She put her arm around me. 'Don't cry, Olive, pet. Really, there's nothing to cry about. It's half fun.—Now, isn't it, Arthur?'

'O yes—only fun altogether,' he answered with a laugh.

But what they said to comfort me, only made my pain the keener. I restrained my tears, however; and seeing there was no help for it, I endeavoured to wrest a promise from Clifford that he would confide in uncle. I talked myself almost hoarse before I could get a reluctant half-promise from him to that effect; and then I partly coaxed, partly ordered, Naomi to return to Uplands. Arthur would have insisted upon accompanying her across the lawn, had not uncle's burly form appeared in the avenue.

I was leaving the room as uncle entered, with a look on his face such as I had never seen before. 'Stay!' he said, in a voice which made me shake.

I returned to the chair I had left a moment before. Uncle closed the door, and walked to the fire without a word. Clifford watched him with varying colour and flickering eyes. Through the profound stillness of the room, I could hear the slow tick-tock of the clock and the hum of the adjacent mill. My heart began to beat heavily as I looked at the two men.

At last Clifford spoke. 'Well, sir, you have seen my father?' he asked.

'Yes,' Uncle's voice was harsher than I could have believed.

'Am I to go to Grange?' the young man said.

'No. Sir Arthur will never see your face again.'

It was I, and not the young man, who cried out in horror at uncle's words. What Clifford said was: 'Never's a long day.' And I thought there was most unseemly lightness in both tone and words.

'You have broken his heart,' uncle answered sternly; 'and for my part, I will never touch your hand in friendship again. Arthur Clifford, I'd rather have followed your father's eldest son to his grave, than stand here to-day knowing what I know of you.'

Clifford's face grew livid, his eyes seemed to contract into two fiery points, and his mouth worked convulsively. 'I suppose you know the whole affair now?' he said recklessly, turning on his heel.

'I do,' uncle said. 'The bill to which you put your father's name, unauthorised by him, was not for three hundred pounds, but for three thousand.'

'That's the whole business,' Clifford said; 'and all the rascally Jew gave me was two thousand, and some rubbish of pictures.'

'And for this you have spoilt your life, ruined your prospects, and broken your father's heart.'

'O sir, it's not so bad as all that.'

'Quite as bad. In your father's name, I have telegraphed to Lord Learmount, asking him for leave of absence for you—as your father's old friend, he will not refuse it—and then, you must flee the country.'

'Flee the country?' he cried amazed.

'Yes,' said uncle sternly; 'or remain here to be arrested as a felon—a forger.'

He winced at that. His teeth clenched so sharply on his under lip that the blood sprang, and his hand clutched the back of a chair fiercely.

'And where can I go, sir?' he asked hoarsely.

'To Liverpool—to my brother Hugh. He will put you on board his ship, *The Twin Sisters*. She sails for Brazil to-morrow. I have settled all with your father.' Uncle spoke in short sharp gasps, as if prolonged sentences were beyond his reach.

Clifford made two or three paces up and down the floor. 'I cannot go. I have no kit, no money,' he said.

'Hugh will supply anything you require for your journey. You shall have one hundred pounds lodged in the hands of our man of business at Rio; and—well, the same sum paid to your credit twice a year, so long as you remain away.'

Clifford gave a bitter laugh. 'When do I start on my swim?' he asked.

I never saw such a look as uncle darted at him. It made me tremble. 'You leave this house to-night at seven o'clock. I will go with you to Liverpool, and see you off in the ship.'

Two days after, uncle returned, and Arthur Clifford was on his way to Brazil.

Well, there was no scandal. The man in whose hands the bill was, lost nothing; he got his three thousand pounds, and a little over, to hold his tongue. No one ever knew the magnitude of the young man's crime save Uncle Tom, Sir Arthur, and myself; for Lady Clifford thought, with the rest of the world, that he had got into a scrape, as young men will, and that in a boyish freak he had run off to see the world; and that he would come back a steadier and a wiser man. I dreaded meeting Naomi, however. How was I to tell her what manner of man this was to whom she had pledged her faith? And yet, when we met, I felt deeply amazed at her gay and careless demeanour. The fancy ball, her beautiful dress, and the enjoyment she was to have at Uncle Hugh's, seemed to occupy her mind, to the exclusion of everything else. And yet, my mind misgave me.

To me she never alluded to the secret I had discovered, and the subject was too keenly painful for me to open it to her; and so a month went by, and the day of the great ball drew near. Ruth was to go as 'Twilight,' Naomi as 'Dawn,' and the dresses were designed by an artist-friend of Uncle Hugh's. They were really beautiful—one all cloudy, dark-blue tulle, and silver gauze; the other, pale blue, with gold stripes flashing through it. In her floating azure robes, with her golden

hair turned back from her white forehead, and a cloudy gauze veil floating over her shoulders, Naomi looked supremely lovely; while sweet Ruth's fair face gleamed like a star on the edge of a soft night-cloud from her misty draperies. Lady Clifford seemed to take a strange pleasure in hearing about the dresses; and the day before the ball, she called me to her side.

'Olive,' she said, 'I have asked Sir Arthur if I may add a little to the beauty of your sisters' dresses to-morrow night. He has given me leave to do what I will. Come with me, dear.'

Half expecting what was to come, I attended her through the familiar room; and then at her direction led her down the wide hall; and through many winding passages to a little dark closet off Sir Arthur's office. She gave me a bunch of keys, pointing out the one I was to use first, and then the others one by one. I opened four great iron-barred doors before I came upon a square box, which, at her bidding, I carried out and set on the desk in the office. The key which opened it hung on her watch-chain; she gave it to me, and I opened the box. For the first time in my life, I saw the Clifford diamonds. There were eight trays in the box. The upper one contained the tiara, seven stars set on two glittering bands of gems. How they beamed out at me, as if glad to catch the light of day upon their glittering facets; and how they gave back light for light in that dim sombre little room, before the beautiful eyes that could not see! I could not speak for a moment, because thoughts came rushing upon me which took my breath away.

'The tiara is uppermost,' Lady Clifford said, softly and sadly, her slender fingers touching the blazing jewels gently, regretfully.

I told her yes, while tears I could not restrain fell silently down my cheeks. To the blind, what worthless things are diamonds, after all!

'The necklace comes next,' she said.

I lifted the tray, and saw it. Nor could I repress a cry of wonder and admiration. It was superb. Three rows of blazing stones formed a collar for the throat; and from that collar depended nine stars, more brilliant, more gorgeous than those in the tiara. The centre star hung low in front; and from it descended three smaller ones, each vying with the other in brightness; while looped from star to star, forming a continuous festoon of flickering splendour, ran a diamond chain, like a river of light.

'Beautiful, is it not?' Lady Clifford said, with a sad smile. Yet I would give it and all the rest for a sight of your little face.' It was the only murmur of discontent or plaint I ever heard from her dear lips.

After she said it, I lost all care for the splendid jewels; their glory seemed dim, their beauty worthless. I lifted tray after tray, and looked at the glittering baubles with contempt. What were they worth, after all? Their radiance could not heal a broken heart, or purchase for their owner one moment's peace of mind.

'Have you come to the last tray, Olive?' Lady Clifford said, in her gentle level voice.

I told her 'yes.'

'You will find a star and crescent there,' she said. 'They do not belong to the Clifford diamonds. They were a bequest from my dear

mother, so that they are my own, to be given as I please. You'll give Naomi the star, as a little remembrance of a poor blind woman, whose darkened hours she has brightened a little. And the crescent is for my sweet Ruth. I'll send her no message, because she'll understand. And you—you, Olive—lift the case containing the star and crescent; your gift is there.'

Apart from the rest, it lay in a case of its own, a cross of pure flame. Not diamonds this, but rubies—rubies, set in a crust of tiny diamonds, burning like living fire. I clasped my hands.

'Oh! dear Lady Clifford! this is too much,' I cried, scarcely knowing what to say.

'Take the three cases; put the rest back, and come,' Lady Clifford answered, with a sad smile. 'Olive, you have helped me so long to carry my weary cross, that this shall be a token to you of my gratitude. Dear, you know whose price is above rubies; you are one of the few.' She kissed me tenderly, and we seemed to grow nearer to each other after that, than we had ever been before.

Rescuing the dear lady's gifts, I put the rest of the diamonds back into their prison, and left them there. Many days went by, many changes came to us all, before I saw them again.

Ruth and Naomi went into ecstasies over their superb presents. Dear little Ruth ran up to the house to fling herself at Lady Clifford's feet, half crying, half laughing, wholly charming, in an ecstasy of delight.

Naomi took her gift much more coolly. 'I suppose I'll have them all some day,' she said. But she wrote Lady Clifford a very graceful letter; and she wore the star set in her golden hair at the ball; while Ruth's cloudlike-veil fell from her sparkling crescent, and floated from her bright face like a mist behind a week-old moon.

After the ball, we seemed to slip back into the old smooth-running everyday life. Uncle Thomas came and went as usual. Sometimes I went to the Mills House and spent a few days there. Sometimes Ruth went, but never Naomi. Had uncle guessed her secret? Often I felt guilty concerning it, and yet I never had courage to ask the truth of him. Between my sister and myself, there was never a mention of Arthur Clifford's name; and yet, by some woman's instinct, I knew full well that she heard from him. Lady Clifford heard from him too. He was in Brazil, at first; then he went northward; and about a year after his departure, a letter from San Francisco told his mother he was settled in California.

Was it that spring or the next one that our brother Paul and Jack Clifford returned home? I can scarcely be certain; at any rate, they came amongst us with the daffodils; and with the falling leaves, sweet Ruth went from us to the Hall, Jack Clifford's wife. Jack was as unlike his elder brother as two men born of the same parents could possibly be. Unlike in face, in form, in disposition; the soul of honour, truthful, straightforward, incapable of deceit, brave and daring, yet gentle as a woman. He and I were of the same age; we had been boy and girl together, and I loved him; but he was not to blame. He had his choice; and if it fell upon my sweet sister, it was no fault of his or mine.

I think Lady Clifford knew, for she grew more

loving and tender with me than ever, and now that the families were so closely linked, made me her confidante in many ways. Uncle Thomas and Uncle Hugh both added their splendid share to our dear Ruth's dower. She went to her husband nobly portioned; and the stately old baronet received her as his daughter with open arms. We all rejoiced in her joy; but I—I wore my blood-red cross in silence.

Naomi's temper did not grow sweeter for dear Ruth's happiness. I think that the contrast between the brothers was an evil thing to her, and that Ruth's perfect happiness cut her to the soul. She heard from Arthur Clifford pretty regularly, although he wrote from a different place almost every time. Now he was in Mexico, now at New York, now at Boston. Twice he wrote from some unknown place in the Far West. Once he told her he had been amongst the Mormons. Sometimes she told me little bits out of his letters, but oftener far she merely said where he was. So two years went by, and in the third year, the letters began to grow fewer and fewer—at last they ceased.

She only set her red lips more proudly and held her head a little higher. No one could observe any other alteration in her lovely face or self-possessed demeanour.

I was standing one morning that year by the library window, when I saw Tom come flying up the avenue from the mills. He must have seen me before I saw him, for he came running towards me, and leaped through the open window. 'Go at once to Grange. Sir Arthur is'—

I filled up the pause he made, crying out: 'Dead?' as the room seemed to spin round with me, and I reeled back into a chair.

'Now, that's just the way of all you women,' cried Tom impatiently; 'going into faints all over the place, instead of having your wits about you when they're most wanted.'

His impatience roused me to a sense of all Sir Arthur's death involved. 'I am not fainting, Tom, not a bit. Tell me what I can do—tell me how.' I could hardly speak.

'There you go again. Pick yourself up, and go to the house as quick as you can. My lady is in a terrible state.'

I knew she would be stricken to the soul; and so I made an effort, and ere the news had spread far, I was at her side.

Sir Arthur's end was sudden; but for years he had known that it might come at any moment. As to his poor wife, she knew the parting could not be for very long, and she took comfort. Ruth and her husband were abroad, at Malta. Of course they came as soon as possible; but Arthur Clifford's whereabouts was not so easily discovered; that he was somewhere in the States, we fancied, but nothing more. Nor did we hear anything of him until the grass was green upon his father's grave. The Uplands was but a dull house for bright Naomi in those days, and so she made frequent long visits among our friends. She happened to be at home when Sir Arthur died; but feeling bored, as she called it, by the cloud which fell upon us all then, she went to Liverpool, as the nearest harbour of refuge from the dullness of home. Just one

month after her departure, Ruth came down to Uplands on a summer morning with a letter in her hand.

'Olive,' she said, 'I have some wonderful news to tell you. Arthur has written to his mother, telling her of his marriage.'

'O Ruth, his marriage!' I gasped.

'Yes. Why shouldn't he marry if he chooses? He is married to a Miss Almeria Scadder, a great beauty and a great heiress. They are on their way home. Here is the letter; read for yourself.'

I took the paper out of her hand, and read it, amazed. How was I to tell Naomi?

WOLF-CHILDREN.

IN depicting the temper and disposition of the wolf, such adjectives as 'ruthless, cunning, and treacherous' are invariably used, and with perfect justice. It would appear, therefore, at first sight almost incredible that there should be many instances on record where children have been carried away, and instead of being devoured, as would assuredly have been the case had the marauder been a panther or leopard, they have been suckled, tended, and reared by them. Some of these have afterwards been recovered; and at this moment there exists a specimen wolf-child at Secundra, a small missionary station a few miles from Agra; so that the story of Romulus and Remus may not be so entirely without foundation as we have hitherto been led to suppose.

Wolves as a rule prey upon the flocks and herds of the inhabitants of the villages in whose neighbourhood they have made their dens, and upon such wild animals as they can hunt down and capture. Among these latter may be mentioned the gazelle-antelope and the black-buck; and many and ingenious are the devices they resort to in order to achieve their purpose. But in the North-western Provinces of India, as about Agra, in Oude and Rajpootana, they are also very destructive to children. Hindus of all classes are exceedingly superstitious regarding the destruction of these predatory brutes, and consider the individual who has been unfortunate enough to shed a drop of wolf's blood, doomed to suffer some grievous calamity. Hence, though a government reward of three rupees per head is offered, it is only the very lowest of all castes—the 'Domes or Dungsars,' as they are called—who will take the trouble to snare and destroy wolves. These people lead a vagrant life, and bivouac in the jungles, and have no superstitious dread of killing any living thing.

The following hypothesis may explain how it comes to pass that so cruel and relentless an animal as the wolf should sometimes be found enacting the interesting part of foster-mother to one of the human species. A female with cubs goes prowling about in search of food for its young, and succeeds in ravishing an Indian home of its infant for that purpose. The cubs,

for some reason or other—not over-sensitiveness, certainly, but perhaps because their carnivorous instincts are as yet comparatively dormant—merely lick the child all over. This probably, according to the code of wolfish etiquette, is equivalent to having eaten salt with an Arab, and the infant is henceforth adopted by the parent, and suckled and brought up with the cubs. Although the human tendency is to go on two legs, we know that even amongst ourselves babies commence by crawling. Now, man is essentially an imitative animal, and seeing the wolves going on all-fours, the alien naturally tries the same method of progression. It would appear, however, that it has found the hands ill-adapted for use in lieu of forefeet, and as a rule the elbows are employed for that purpose; in consequence of this choice, the knees too have to be used instead of the feet, and hence horny excrescences are usually found on both the knees and the elbows.

Perhaps the two subjoined true narratives of wolf-children that have been captured in India, may prove interesting.

One morning many years ago, Mr H—, who happened at the time to be magistrate and collector of the Etawah District, was out riding, accompanied by a couple of sowars or mounted orderlies. They were passing over a portion of road that lay in the vicinity of the ravines of the river Jumna, when two half-grown wolf-cubs crossed their path; and following them more slowly, came a very remarkable-looking creature, which shambled along on all-fours in an extraordinarily uncouth fashion. This turned out to be a wolf-child. Letting the other two go unmolested, the three men proceeded to hunt down the human cub, and succeeded in bringing it to bay. As they wished to take the creature alive, and were altogether unwilling to hurt it in any way, they found the greatest difficulty in attempting to secure it; for it fought, bit, and clawed with extreme fierceness and pertinacity; indeed, having driven it into a corner, Mr H— and one of the sowars had to mount guard, while the other native proceeded to the nearest village, and got a stout blanket, for the purpose of throwing it over its head; and it was by this means that the capture was at length effected. All the way home, the wolf-child behaved like a mad thing, screaming and howling, now piteously, now in a paroxysm of impotent rage. It was, however, taken to Mr H—'s house; but it would not be comforted, and for a long time refused all kinds of food, including raw meat. The creature was a boy of about nine years of age; and it may here be stated that no female wolf-child has ever been heard of or seen. It is not easy to assign a sufficient reason for the fact that females have never been so discovered, unless we suppose that, being less vigorously constituted, they have been unable to withstand the terrible hardships of such an existence, and have very soon sickened and died.

In appearance, this boy was exceedingly repulsive; his features were blunt and coarse, and

their expression brutalised and insensible. As for his habits, they were exactly those of a wild animal.

Mr H.—caused minute inquiries to be made throughout the neighbouring villages as to whether the inhabitants had lost any children through their being carried off by wolves, and if so, whether they could recognise the human wail that had been recovered, by means of birth-marks, moles, or other such indelible tokens. In the course of a few days the father and mother of the lad were discovered. They identified him by certain well-defined marks about the breast and shoulders, and stated he had been carried away when about two years of age. His parents, however, found him very difficult to manage, for he was most fractious and troublesome—in fact, just a caged wild beast. Often during the night, for hours together, he would give vent to most unearthly yells and moans, destroying the rest and irritating the tempers of his neighbours, and generally making night hideous. On one occasion, his people chained him by the waist to a tree that stood near the hut, which was situated on the outskirts of the village. Then a rather curious incident occurred. It was a bright moonlight night; and two wolf-cubs—undoubtedly those in whose companionship he had been captured—attracted apparently by his cries, while on the prowl, came to him, and were distinctly seen to gambol about and play with him, with as much familiarity and affection as if they considered him quite one of themselves. They only left him on the approach of morning, when movement and stir again arose in the village.

The wolf-boy, however, did not survive long. Accustomed to the wilds for at least half-a-dozen years, captivity and the change in his mode of life appeared not to agree with him, for he gradually pined away and died. He never spoke a word; nor did a single ray of human intelligence ever shed its refining light over his poor debased features.

The next story is taken from a work published some five-and-twenty years ago, by a then well-known Indian political officer.

‘There is now at Sultanpore a boy who was found in a wolf’s den, near Chandour on the Goomtee River, about two and a half years ago. A trooper, sent by the native governor to the district of Chandour to demand the payment of some revenue, was passing along the banks of the Goomtee, when he saw a large female wolf leave her den, followed by three whelps and a boy. The boy went on all-fours, and was on the best possible terms with the dam and her whelps; and the mother seemed to guard all four with equal care. They went down to the river and drank without perceiving the native, who sat upon his horse watching them. As soon as they were about to turn back, the trooper pushed on, intending to cut off and secure the boy; but the latter ran quite as fast as the whelps, and kept up easily with its foster-parent. Eventually they all re-entered the den. The trooper then assembled some people with pickaxes and attempted to dig them out. When they had dug some seven or eight feet into the bank, the wolf escaped with her cubs and the boy. They were pursued by the trooper, followed by the fastest young

men of the party on foot; the former headed them, and turned the boy back on to the men, who then captured him. They took him to the village and tried to make him speak, but could get no answer save an angry growl or snarl. He was some weeks at the village, and large crowds assembled each day to see him. On the approach of a grown-up person, he became alarmed, and tried to steal away; when, however, a child came near, he rushed at it with a fierce snarl and attempted to bite it. He rejected cooked meat with disgust; but when raw meat was offered, he seized it eagerly, put it under his paws like a dog, and ate it with evident relish. He would not let any person approach him while he was eating, but had no objection to a dog coming and sharing his food with him.

‘The lad was handed over to the Rajah of Hasanpore, and soon after was sent by him to Sultanpore, to Captain Nicholetts, the European officer commanding the first regiment of Oude local infantry. The latter made him over to the charge of his servants, who take great care of him, but can never get him to utter a syllable. He is inoffensive, except when teased (Captain Nicholetts says), and will then growl surlily at the person annoying him. He now eats almost anything thrown to him, but prefers raw flesh, which he devours greedily. A quilt stuffed with cotton was given to him, when the weather became very cold this season; but he tore it to pieces and ate a portion of it, cotton and all, with his food every day. He is very fond of bones, particularly uncooked ones; these he masticates apparently with as much ease as if they were meat. He continues to like dogs and jackals, and permits them to feed with him, if he happens to be eating when they approach.

‘Captain Nicholetts, in letters dated 14th and 19th September 1850, told me that the boy died in the latter end of August, and that he had never been seen to laugh or smile. He understood but little what was said, and appeared to take no notice of anything going on around him; nor did he form any attachments whatever. He never played with the numerous children around him, nor did he seem wishful to do so. When not hungry, he used to sit petting and stroking a *pariah* or vagrant dog, which he used to allow to feed out of the same dish with him. A short time before his death, Captain Nicholetts shot this dog, as he used to eat by far the greater part of the meat given to the boy, who in consequence was getting quite thin. The lad didn’t seem in the least to care for the death of his companion. He used signs when he wanted anything, and very few of them. When hungry, he pointed to his mouth. When his food was placed some distance from him, he used to run to it on all-fours; but at other times, not frequently, he would walk upright. He shunned human beings male and female, and would never willingly remain near one. To cold, heat, and rain he appeared alike indifferent, and seemed to care for nothing but eating. He was very quiet, and required no kind of restraint while he was with Captain Nicholetts’ servants—that is, for the space of about two years. He was never heard to utter a single word, till within a few minutes

of his death, when he put his hand to his head and said "it ached;" he then asked for some water, after drinking which, he died. This boy when caught was about ten years of age.

JIM FLANNERTY'S GHOST.

'So you really believe in ghosts, Brian?' said I.

'Sure, your honour,' returned Brian with a grin, 'it's not for me to disbelieve what I've seen wid my own eyes.'

'Do you mean to say,' exclaims my friend Smith, 'that you have actually seen a ghost?'

'Faith, thin, an' it's myself saw one not two weeks ago, as plain as I see you at this minit. More by token, 'twas that same ghost got me my Mary, the purtiest girl in the whole village; not to spake ov an illigant cottage an' a thrifle ov gowld beside.'

'Come, that sounds interesting. Couldn't you give us a description of this obliging apparition?'

'Is it an account o' the ghost that ye're wantin'? Sure, an' I'll give it ye wid the greatest playsure in life, only ye'll not be repateing it to any livin' crayture, or, faith, I'd niver hear the last ov it?'

We promise silence; and accordingly Brian, duly fortified with a glass of his favourite liquor, proceeds.

'Ye were maybe acquainted, gentlemen, wid ould Larry O'Donaghue?'

Unfortunately, we had never had that honour.

'An' small loss to ye, aither,' quoth Brian. 'But he was Mary's father, an' a purty father too; but that's naither here nor there. Well, I was a sort ov relation ov his; so, whin my mother died—she was a widdy—I wint to live wi' him an' Mary. She was a girl ov twelve thin, an' myself wasn't much older; but ye see I lived there seven years, an' by that time I was grown uncommon fond ov Mary; not that she'd ever listen to me, the crayture, whin I wanted to tell her so; but still she didn't seem to mislike me. Well, I'd saved a thrifle, an' I was arnin' fair wages; so I'd jist made up my mind to ask Mary to be my wife, whin who should turn up but Jim Flannerty, bad cess to him! Now, Jim was a sort ov cousin ov ould O'Donaghue; an' he'd left his ship on sick-leave, though you would not have thowt it, to look at him, seein' he was as red as a carrot. Av coorse, he wor always in an' out ov the house, an' seemed mighty sthruck wi' Mary, an' she wi' him. Well, the long an' the short ov it was that ould O'Donaghue sent me on a fool's errand to Dublin; an' whin I come back, Mary an' Flannerty wor engaged. Av coorse, I couldn't stay at home after that, so I jist wint away; an' I didn't come back for two years.'

'Well, I returns one day, an' I finds ould O'Donaghue dead, an' Mary livin' in the cottage wid an' ould aunt. "Sure, it's myself, Mary," says I. "Arrah, thin, don't be onaisy!—An' it's

Mrs Flannerty that ye'll be now?" for I wanted to make sure, ye see. So thin it comes out that Jim Flannerty's not been heard of for a year an' more, an' the ship he sailed in's lost. Well, I was mighty glad to hear that Flannerty was out ov the way; though, av coorse, I was rale sorry for Mary, an' did my best to comfort her. However, she wouldn't noways believe that Jim was drowned. "Sure, but it's on some desert island that he is," says she; an' not all my talking could git that out ov her head.

'Well, one evenin' she an' I was walking along by the river, an' says I: "Mary mavourneen, will you be my wife, for I've loved you since the day I first set eyes on you?"

"Och, thin, Brian O'Brady," says she, "but I'm promised to Jim."

"Deed, thin, Mary alanna," says I, "but it's dead an' drowned that he is; so take me instead, an' it's not repenting it that ye'll be."

"I'll not believe that he's dead," says she, "till I see his ghost!"

'An' would ye believe it? That very minit I turns round, an' sees the ghost behind us!'

(I here interrupt Brian to ask for some description of the spectre.)

'Well, ye see, I didn't observe it very particular, for Mary av coorse screams an' drops down in a faint; but I jist remarked 'twas mortal ugly, an' flames was comin' out ov its mouth an' nose an' shootin' all over it.'

'(Oh, come now!' breaks in Smith, but sub-sides on my looking at him reprovingly.)

'An' there was an awful smell ov sulphur an' burnin' about it,' continues Brian, 'though I wouldn't say it to Mary, for fear ov hurtin' her feelin's. Well, she soon comes round, an' says she: "Where's the ghost, Brian?"

"It's vanished," says I.

"An' was it Jim Flannerty's?" says she, very low.

"Av coorse it was," says I.

"Did he spake to ye, Brian, darlint?" says she.

"We had a few minits' conversation," says I.

"An' what was it ye were sayin', thin?"

"Troth, an' I'll tell you the whole," says I.

"The ghost says to me—(I'll jist put my arm around ye, Mary, an' thin ye needn't be afraid)—the ghost says: "Brian O'Brady!" says he.

"Jim Flannerty," says I.

"You're an honest fellow," says he.

"Troth, ye're payin' me too great a compliment," says I, for I thowt it best to be civil, ye see.

"By no manes," says he. "Will you do me a favour?"

"Wid the greatest playsure in life," says I.

"I'm engaged to a young woman," says he—(Don't scream, Mary, darlint; I'm holdin' ye tight)—"an' present circumstances don't allow ov my marryin'; will you take her instead ov me?"

"Sure, it's proud an' glad that I'll be to do it," says I.—An' wi' that the ghost vanishes. "So, Mary, darlint, there's nought against our bein' married at once."

'Well, the long an' the short o' it is, we were married that week; an' it's as happy as the day is long that we are now.'

A roar of laughter from Smith greets the conclusion of Brian's narrative.

'What is the matter?' I inquire.

'Why, I was the ghost!' replies he.—'I say, Brian, did you ever hear of "luminous paint?"'

'Sure, thin, your honour, my own grandfather painted half the houses in K—; so it's few paints that I haven't seen, seein' he used to make me mix them.'

'Well, if he covered the houses with luminous paint, it was rather a brilliant idea of his, though I don't suppose that it did actually occur to him!—You see this mixture here, Brian? Well, if it were dark, and I rubbed some of this on any object, that object would at once look bright and shining, and appear to give out light.'

'Sure, that's mighty clever, your honour,' says Brian.

'I had been trying for a long time,' continues Smith, 'to find out of what this paint is composed, and some evenings ago I succeeded in discovering the secret. I was so delighted with my success, that I did not wait to rub the stuff from my hands and face, but rushed down to my friend Professor Nichol's, to show him the result of my experiments. I remember I went along by the river; so you see that I must have been your "mortal ugly" ghost' [Smith is a handsome fellow, and a favourite with the ladies], 'who unconsciously did you such a good turn. The ghostly "conversation" existed, I presume, only in your imagination.'

'Sure, didn't I think all the time that 'twas mighty like yourself, Mr Smith!' says Brian drily.

'Then why did you tell us that it was Flannerty?' I inquire.

'Arrah, thin, but Jim Flannerty wor uncommon like your honour's friend, as you'd see if he were standin' here this minit; so why shouldn't their ghosts be alike too?' And Brian took his departure, leaving us laughing over his ready wit and inventive genius.

OCCASIONAL NOTE.

A STRANGE STORY OF RETRIBUTION IN ANIMAL LIFE.

A CORONER'S inquest was recently held in London upon the dead body of a man who had been killed by an elephant belonging to Mr Myers, circus proprietor. The elephant in question was a female, and was known by the name of 'Blind Bill,' because she was stone-blind. The elephant was in general a perfectly quiet animal; but had nourished a prejudice against the man who fell a victim to its revenge. Eight months before the fatal occurrence, and while the circus company was performing at Reading, the deceased, who was then a hayker in that town, was one day watching the elephants, when 'Blind Bill' put her trunk into one of his baskets and ate all his vegetables. Becoming incensed at his loss and the laughter of the bystanders, the man pulled out his penknife and cruelly stabbed the elephant in the trunk. This was the beginning of an ill-will between the man and the quadruped; for the man having afterwards got employment with the company, was attacked one morning by the elephant and crushed to death against a wall.

But the most remarkable part of the elephant's

story is still to be mentioned. This refers to the manner in which the animal lost its eyesight, and was told by Mr Myers in his evidence at the above inquest. He said he had had the elephant for twenty years, and during the whole of that period she had always been of a singularly mild disposition, unless provoked. For instance, about thirteen years ago, a groom in his employment put out one of her eyes with a pitchfork; for which act of diabolical cruelty the man was dismissed. About twelve months later the animal lost the sight of the other eye, and since that time had been stone-blind. Some two years afterwards, Mr Myers's company was performing in Jersey, and while there, the groom in question came into the stable in which the elephant was, and, slapping her on the side, said: 'This is the old brute who got me dismissed.' On hearing the man's voice, the elephant pushed him up against the wall, and so injured his head and eyes that ever since that time the man had been what is termed *cross-eyed*. The coroner, Sir John Humphreys, in addressing the jury, rightly observed that this incident, as related by Mr Myers, was a curious one, and was certainly a just retribution upon the groom.

THE WEANING OF THE LAMBS.

HERE, on the trunk of this uprooted pine,
Sole barren thing amid the summer's green,
I'll rest awhile, and let my spirit take
Its fill of anguish. Oh, to heart like mine,
Deep shadowed with the gloom of present grief,
How human-like, how full of pity, come
The long loud wailings of the lambs that bleat
Their sorrows in a crowd on yonder hill!
How painfully along the twilight air
Swell the deep dirge pathetic! All the wood
Is listening breathless to the mournful sound.
The very mists with which sad Evening veils
The dewy earth, and clouds the blue serene,
Seem struck to stillness in their phantom-shapes,
And cling about the steep of yon tall crag
Like mourners round the couch they cannot ease.
The soft warm shower that but an hour ago
Suffused the vale, and cheered its drooping life,
Has left bright droplets on the shadowy wood,
And every leaf is glistening like an eye
Of silent sorrow for the fleecy fold
That give such sad complainings to the night.

O creatures, gentlest of all gentle things!
I cannot linger here, and, lingering, list
The expressive voice of inarticulate grief
Rising and falling with the ebb and flow
Of your unspoken sorrow, and not feel
Some natural throes of sympathetic pain.
I would not seek to shut—were 't in my power—
'Gainst any creature on God's blessed earth,
Struck down by woe, the sluices of my heart:
Nay, rather would I fling the floodgates wide,
To let my pity mingle with your grief,
And from the confluence of the sacred tides,
Like palm-tree by the desert's lonely spring,
Draw secret nourishment and hidden strength.

J. R.

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EUROPEAN LIFE IN EGYPT.

IN Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, Suez, and Ismailia, there was before the recent events such a large proportion of Europeans to the native population, that a few words in regard to the particular class of Europeans who inhabited these towns, their habits and modes of life, may not be without interest at the present time.

Cairo was to Alexandria what the West End is to the City of London—to some extent what Paris is to Marseilles. It was a city of pleasure, and for this reason attracted a class of Europeans who are not to be found in other parts of Egypt. And its position in the centre of so much that is ancient and interesting—the Pyramids, the mosques, the tombs, the bazaars, Heliopolis and Sakkarah, the Boulak Museum, &c.—and its admirable situation as a starting-point for the journey up the Nile, all gave a distinct character to its European population. For the trades-people depended almost entirely upon the visitors, and the season extended from November to April.

There is, or rather was, a coterie formed of the residents in Cairo, chiefly composed of the Europeans belonging to the various governmental departments, and their families. These, recruited by the arrival of friends, or others bringing introductions from home, formed the 'society' of Cairo. There was plenty of lawn-tennis of an afternoon at the house of the popular Consul-general, Sir Edward Malet. Then there were dances and dinners, and a fair second-rate opera company, and returns of hospitality at Shepherd's Hotel, where theatricals and fancy balls would be arranged, or excursions planned, or flirtations carried on. Disquieting rumours were meanwhile afloat, as early as in March last, as to a contemplated massacre of Europeans, but the idea was scouted; nor was there anything in the attitude of the natives to support the rumour. During the Hadji, or procession bringing the holy carpet from Mecca, Europeans felt some little doubt as to their possible treatment by the

mob, excited by religious enthusiasm, and by the presence of some thousands of soldiers, who were known to be unfriendly; but there were only a few isolated instances of disturbance, which were as likely to have proceeded from one side as the other.

The Europeans engaged in commerce were chiefly Greeks or Levantines, with a fair sprinkling of Italians, Germans, and Maltese. It does not seem to be generally known that throughout Egypt, Italian is the only European language in common use. You may go into dozens of good shops in Cairo where French is not understood. All official notices are in Arabic and Italian. The hours of business are in the morning as on the continent, and from twelve to three nothing is done. The European Cairene of commerce spends a good deal of his time at the café smoking his narghileh and drinking coffee during the day, ready for any business that he may be called to, but not seeking it; and in the evening he likes to listen to the hideous Arabic music, to gamble at roulette or to dice with the hawkers who pass from café to café, dice-box in hand, to play you for their wares—ducks and fowls, soaps and brushes and combs and writing-paper, and the like.

Alexandria was the Marseilles of the East, commercially speaking, and it had finer and better paved streets, finer houses and shops, and a drive by the Promenade and the Mahmoudieh Canal, fringed by more beautiful and luxurious gardens and villas than are to be found in Cairo. Its business character was at once apparent. The crowds of well-dressed men about the Bourse; the activity and hurry in the surrounding streets; the loaded carts at the warehouse doors; the brass plates of companies, and bankers, and merchants; the rushing hither and thither of the chevasses or messengers in their Syrian dresses; the Arab porters, with legs bent under the enormous weights they carried on their backs—all spoke of a community full of the life of business. The talk was of bales and cargoes, and consignments and exchanges; and men adjourned

to the famous café in the *Rue de la Bourse* to clench a bargain after the sociable fashion of Manchester or Liverpool. The wealthy merchants lived out in the suburb of Ramleh, about four miles from the town; and when anything particular in the form of amusement was to take place in Alexandria, the play-bills informed the public that trains would be run to Ramleh so many minutes after the performance was over, as they might do if Ramleh were a suburb of Cottonopolis.

The European young man of business—English, French, German, Italian, or Greek—was like his counterpart in our own large commercial centres, somewhat dressy and given to jewellery and rather fast equipages; but the English had their cricket, and rowing, and athletic clubs into the bargain. Then the young men had the entrée of the houses with which they were connected, and the society of the families. There were two theatres; a very fair band at the Café Paradiso, formed of fair Triestines and Bohémiennes; *trente et quarante*, if one were so disposed; capital beer at the brasseries—notably Fink's; and oysters to be had for a piastre (twopence-halfpenny) a dozen. The lower class of Europeans in Alexandria were numerically as strong and morally perhaps worse than the Arabs in the town. In the summer, all Europeans who could, came from the interior to Alexandria for bathing.

Port Said is an overcrowded little coaling-station that was called into existence by the Suez Canal. Its growth has been something marvellous in the last ten years, and, besides coal, it carries on a very brisk trade in stores of all kinds with the steamers passing through the Canal. The respectable portion of the European inhabitants, bearing a very small proportion to the disreputable, have few resources out of themselves. The main street is scarcely fit for decent people to walk in after sundown, after which time the side streets and the Arab quarter at the back of the town send forth about as pretty a mixture of Levantine and Arab black-guardism as is to be found anywhere in the world. There is no redeeming feature in this miniature pandemonium, with its gambling-houses, grog-shops, and general immorality; and the low-class Europeans, chiefly from the Greek Archipelago and the Levant, are a good deal worse than the native population. And when a khamseen wind is blowing, and Port Said is enveloped in a mist of coal-dust and sand, it is not surprising that even the better class of inhabitants should rush to the billiard-tables of the *Palatine*, and the green cloth of *El Dorado*, to get rid of the killing depression of the place.

It is pleasant to turn from the western port of the Suez Canal to the little town of Ismailia. The post-boat runs daily by the Canal, carrying mails and passengers, and takes about six hours for the journey. Ismailia is a veritable oasis in the desert waste between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. By a long avenue shaded by acacia trees, you pass from the landing-stage, cross the Freshwater Canal, and reach the public gardens, which are laid out with great taste, with a fountain sparkling in the middle. The streets of the town radiate from this centre. There are trees everywhere, and it is the cleanest town in Egypt. It is altogether French; there are no shops, except at the Arab bazaar, about half a mile

away across the sand. There is an hotel by the landing-place to which salt-water baths are attached; and a very comfortable and homely hotel near the gardens, where the few Europeans there are—nearly all French—take breakfast and dinner at the table d'hôte. They are chiefly officials connected with the Suez Canal, with a few merchants and clerks engaged in the cotton trade with Zagazig and Mansourah. M. Lesseps has a villa here which he occasionally visits. There is a deadly quiet about Ismailia; and empty houses and empty offices, the absence of shops and cafés, together with its separation (characteristically French!) by half a mile from the Arab quarter, give the town a deserted appearance, which, however, is not without its charm in a country where huddling together, and the importunities of begging natives, are notable nuisances. A few little shoe-blacks, who are ready to show you the Khedive's palace or the other lions, or to brush your boots, alone pester you for backsheesh, rather as a matter of course than with any earnestness. They are amusing little ragamuffins, with none of the sharpness and vice of the little town *gamins* of Egypt. Ismailia, then, may be described as containing a small French colony, living their life, after the manner of Frenchmen abroad, very much as they would in their own country, and having as little to do with the natives as they conveniently can. A line of rail runs from Ismailia to Nefisa on the main line between Suez and Cairo, so that it will in all likelihood become a place of some importance in the current course of events in Egypt.

Suez, with the most delightful climate in Egypt, with neither the 'damps' of Alexandria nor the dust of Cairo, might, with a particle of the taste and discrimination shown by the French at Ismailia, have been made a perfect garden. The soil is most productive, covered by a mere coating of sand; and the excellence of the fruits and vegetables that are so sparsely cultivated here, are well known. Had the docks been made nearer the town—not, it has been thought, an impossible feat—Suez might have been made nearly as busy a seaport as Port Said; and from the charm of its climate, combining the purity of the desert air and the saltiness of the Red Sea, it would doubtless have drawn many families to 'winter' there, who went to Cairo. But with the town some two miles away from the docks, business confined to the quay and the custom-house, no amusements, a generally tumble-down look, and no trace of an attempt to brighten or beautify it, it is not surprising that Suez should usually be characterised as a 'wretched hole.' The European society in Suez was composed of the agents and officials of the Canal, the large steam companies, the post, the telegraph, and various offices of the Egyptian government, and for the most part English, French, and Italian. An excursion to the Atakah Mountains or to Moses' Wells across the Gulf, fishing in the Red Sea, shooting duck and quail in the winter, strolling up to the Freshwater Canal, donkey-riding to the docks or Terra Pleina, a sail down the Gulf, occasionally lawn-tennis, a dance, or some private theatricals, formed the sum of the amusements in Suez. As in most small communities, however, there was little 'coherence'

amongst the families, and the only really universal sentiment seemed to be that of lamenting the fate that compelled a residence in such a spot.

From February to April, the coming and going of travellers for the desert journey to Mount Sinai or Petra, and sportsmen for the Soudan or Abyssinia, would enliven the courtyard of the hotel; swarthy Bedouins in charge of the caravans, with their camels; dragomans swaggering and armed to the teeth; monkeys, jackals, and other strange beasts and birds clattering and screaming; horns, and skins, and tusks, and other spoils of the chase; spears, and daggers, and shields, and clubs, and other implements of barbarous warfare, all scattered about amongst the various *impedimenta*—tent-poles, ropes, chests, saddles, guns, &c.—of these excursions. There was a reading-room and bar off the courtyard, and here young Suez would come to see the newspapers, and listen to stories of flood and field, or hear how things fared east or west, as passengers from homeward or outward bound vessels turned up from a saunter ashore to slake their thirst. The relations between Europeans and Arabs were not always of a friendly character, and occasionally serimmages took place. The Arabs are a true-natured lot, many of them with Bedouin blood in them, and their predatory instincts have rendered them in many cases excessively troublesome to Europeans.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXVII.—‘YOU DIDN’T ANSWER THE TWO LETTERS I SENT YOU AT THE GRAND HOTEL.’

A PIONIC party had assembled on Welbeck Head on a splendid morning in the early days of June. The picnic party leaving itself free to ramble over the sterner picturesqueness of the headland, naturally chose Welbeck Hollow to take luncheon in. Perhaps the Hollow looked its best to an artist’s eye in autumn, when the foliage of its trees had grown mellow with the tints of the dying year; but on this particular June morning it was very lovely; and he or she who demanded a fitter place for open-air delight, would have been hard to please indeed. For the whole broad expanse of blue above the headland absolutely seemed to laugh; the air was warm, the herbage dry, and the foliage in the first flush of its summer beauty. The tears of the imprisoned princess sparkled in the sunlight, and the little stream they made bubbled away through its channel of lichen-covered rock with a voice of perpetual music.

At this gathering, Gerard played host, and his mother hostess; and there were two or three score of people there, mostly young, and nearly all bent on enjoying themselves, as their time of life and the splendid weather befitted. Rising against the belt of trees, in contrast to their green, were two or three tents of striped pink and white. The girls were gaily dressed, and moved about merrily here and there, making pretty, shifting pictures, on which any eye but that of a cynic born might rest well pleased. I have said before—and I feel safe in repeating it—that the average of beauty in these favoured

islands is high. Most of the young ladies were pretty, and some one or two downright beautiful. But from amongst them all, had Paris been there to play judge again, Constance would have carried off the apple. Now, men are so constituted, that a beautiful woman in their eyes always looks as though she were something more than beautiful. Rosy cheek, coral lip, starlike eyes, all these things, charming and admirable of themselves, reveal to the gaze of the male creature inward and spiritual beauties which the fair proprietress of cheek, lip, and eye may be miles away from. ‘Sure, nothing ill can dwell in such a temple?’ My love-stricken Amandus, I know not. I am myself all too susceptible to the charms which have entrapped you. I am not stern enough to act as censor in such a matter; but the sweet eyes may not mean constancy, nor the sweet lips good temper. Go your ways, Amandus; wed the lady if she will, and be as happy as you may. The chances are she is worth twenty of you; but beware of taking her for an angel because she looks like one. Beware? Whoever did beware in such a case? Run away, Amandus, and be happy. Chloe awaits you; and though I were wiser than I am, why should you care to listen? Perhaps in a year’s time you may be able to write your own sermons.

It was not any more than lover-like folly in Gerard to set a name and a virtue together. Constance and constancy ran always together in his mind. Always the recipient receives according to his own measure. The tunes which were familiar to you in childhood move you far more than more beautiful airs since listened to, because you put your own memories and your own emotions into them. The worshipper creates his own deity. Venus, and other forms of beauty for old Greece; fetich, bits of rag or stick for modern Ashantee or Ujiji. And it is so with love. Your wisest lover is your noblest man. And if you meet this by telling me that Arthur marries Guinevere, that John Milton is three times unlucky, that Samson falls into the hands of Delilah, you have said nothing unanswerable. The blameless king worshipped purity though he knelt at a false shrine. I have no doubt that one of the Mrs. Miltons stood for Eve, and gave us an immortal picture, to which she was no more like than I to Hercules. The big-limbed practical jester of old days had so frank and honest a foolish heart that he believed in Delilah when she had twice betrayed him. The true lover sees his own possible ideal best actually existent in the woman he loves, and before that he bows down and worships. You can always deceive loyalty, because it is so simple-minded where it loves. It is harder to deceive mean-eyed suspicion, that peers everywhere. And the loyal-hearted Gerard had no doubts. That other men admired Constance, was very likely; men must needs admire transcendent beauty when they see it, and there was no jealousy in him, any more than in Othello before Iago transformed him.

As host, Gerard had duties in which he was proud to be associated with Constance if she chose the association; but when she rambled away, the duties held him, and he had no complaint against her. He no more suspected Constance than he

suspected himself, because she was his very ideal possible best, and at his poorest he was loyal and honest. It clouded his sunshine a little when he missed her; he had otherwise been no lover. But he would see her again by-and-by, and meantime she was probably enjoying herself, and would be back again shortly. She did not come back so shortly as he had hoped; and after a while, he appointed a lieutenant, and set out to hunt for her, and naturally went the wrong way.

Constance, with head drooping just a little, had walked away from the white and pink striped tents, and winding up through umbrageous foliage along a path of gray rock, with green and golden lichen glinting on it here and there, had come out upon a sort of platform, which commanded a view of the whole arena of pleasure. Her cheek was somewhat paler and less full than it should have been, and her eyes were rather soft than lustrous. For a moment she paused, and through the branches which concealed her, looked down upon the Hollow, and then turned and went upward towards the hoary summit of the great headland. Life chirruped and hummed and rustled in the air and in the wood on either side. Gray rabbits frolicked across the path; the squirrel sat up impudently in the undergrowth almost at her very feet, and cracked a nut from his winter hoard; the insect tribes wheeled round and round in dizzy circles, as if drunk with sunlight; and the wanton birds sang until the leafy covert echoed to their music. The very ground she trod on was embroidered gold and green in shifting patterns, as the branches waved and the changing sunbeams flickered. Lost in her own thoughts, she wandered on until the bare shoulder of the headland heaved up from the frondage and the sea lay in view. There, in the shelter of a great boulder, washed smooth by prehistoric waters, and rolled there by some unknown agency, she sat down, and trailing her parasol point along the surface of the granite, made fanciful patterns of no meaning. At times, a faint, faint sound travelled up to where she sat from the picnic party, half a mile away. Voices called to each other in the woods. The sea, far below, made a solemn murmur. A footstep startled her. She looked up, and there stood Val Strange before her, not fifty yards distant.

There was no path up here on the bare top of the headland; but Val stood in a sort of gully, with vast irregular stones piled upon each other on each side of him; and this natural passage if pursued would have led him to the spot upon which Constance sat. But seeing her in time, and believing himself to be unobserved by her, he turned, shot behind a great boulder, and by devious ways climbed to the top of the right-hand ridge, concealing himself from her gaze all the way. He had no doubt that Gerard was with her, and was anxious to escape unseen. So he crawled stealthily from shelter to shelter, and in brief time came on a line with her, and from behind a rock peeped down. Then he saw that she was quite alone, and repented him that he had hidden; he could at least have lifted his hat to her and have seen her face. A thrice-rejected lover had so much right in the world, if fortune should favour him. For a minute or two he watched; but she was turned away from him, and he could see nothing of her face. He made a flank movement, and secured a sight of her

whole figure, and then he saw that she was not only alone, but that she was weeping. She had seen that he saw her, and she had marked him as he made away. *Hinc illic lachrymæ.* Val was ignorant; but her loneliness encouraged him, her distress touched him, his passion drew him to her, and in short he scrambled down the rocks and made the best of his way towards her.

She heard him coming; by some electric message of the heart, she knew that it was his footstep, and not that of any straying picnicker; and with feminine guile, she dried her tears, threw into the slope of her shoulders a sort of pensive air of landscape observation, and feigned to be unconscious of the intrusion. As he came nearer, her apparent ignorance of his presence chilled and repelled him, and he felt that it would have been far easier to have approached straightforwardly, since chance apparently so willed it, and have gone his way. He was half-inclined to return, and stood still for a second or two. The pause warned her. She had cried when he had seemed to avoid her; yet almost in a minute she had told herself it was best he should go by; and yet, and yet, and yet again, when she heard his approaching footstep, her heart rejoiced, and now she could not bear that he should go. With a fine pretence of negligence and accident, she turned, and seeing him standing there, she arose, as if with a little start of surprise, and holding forth her hand, advanced a step or two to meet him. Val raised his hat, and stepping forward, took the proffered hand.

'I had not thought you were at the picnic, Mr Strange.'

'No,' said Val. 'I had an invitation to be there; but—I did not expect to be in England at this time, and——' He did not finish what he had to say, if indeed he had decided to say anything; but looking at her face, he saw that she seemed happy, in spite of his suspicion that she had been weeping a minute or two back. Her eyes sparkled, her cheek was flushed, and she was all grace and beauty. Val would have been an egotist indeed if he had set down all this to his own return. Lovers do not torture themselves in real life so much as they do in novels, where, as you know, a poor author must fill up his three volumes somehow; but it is beyond doubt that they are a stupid and a self-torturing race. 'I was an ass to think she was crying,' said Val to himself. 'She is happy enough. I suppose she loves the fellow after all.'

'Indeed,' said Constance, lightly and brightly enough. 'And where did you think of going?'

'My yacht is lying in Quadross Bay,' said Val, 'and I thought of sailing somewhere, last Wednesday.'

'A vague sort of destination, isn't it?' said Constance, smiling. 'Somewhere?'

'Yes,' said Val moodily; 'vague enough.' He had not expected to meet her and talk in this off-hand way with her. 'She means to be friendly, I suppose,' he thought, 'and has the sense to let bygones be bygones.'

'Shall we talk nothing but commonplace?' thought Constance. 'Has my silence set up an unbreakable barrier?' Silence was too terrible, and she must say something. 'The Hollow is a lovely place for a picnic,' she said. (Anything does for small-talk.)

Val supposed the Hollow was well enough. 'I don't seem to care much for scenery lately,' said poor Val vacuously.

'No?' said Constance.

'No,' said Val. Then ensued a conversational break-down, and the silence became extremely awkward. The two hearts could not whisper to each other through the barrier. Constance made a pretence of surveying the seascape. Val, being a man, had less tact, and was still less an actor, of course. In love's arena, woman stands on her native heath. The male creature is only a wanderer there, and feels himself lost. But though she kept more outward and inward self-possession at the moment than he did, she felt the continued quiet weigh so heavily, that she was obliged to break it, and in her anxiety to say something, proposed the last thing she desired. 'Shall we join the others, Mr Strange, since you are here, after all?'

'No,' said Val; 'I don't care about it, thank you.' Then he made a desperate plunge. 'It's very kind of you to meet me in this way. It's the wisest way, no doubt. But I'm not quite equal to it—yet. You didn't answer the two letters I sent you at the Grand Hotel, and I've seen ever since that it was a presumptuous and unmanly thing to write them. But it's not my fault that you're the loveliest woman in the world, and—'

'Letters?' cried Constance. She never meant to deny the truth; but she had only received one, and she was eager to exculpate herself from the graver charge of cruelty and neglect he brought against her when he spoke of two.

'Didn't you get them?' cried Val, half wild with a sudden rush of new hope. He gave her no time for answer. 'Don't you know why I went away from England? Don't you know that I was ignorant of all that happened during my absence, until I came back and found those papers?' The mere mention of the papers brought Gerard to his mind, and checked him. But he broke past the thought, and went on all the more impetuously. 'And when I found that you were free again, I only waited to give Gerard a fair chance, and followed you at once. I wrote to you twice, and had no answer; and I took your silence as the strongest negative. It seemed cruel—I can't say I didn't think it cruel. By what terrible mischance they missed you, I can't guess. But—would you have left me in such bitter suspense had you received them? Would you have been so disdainful and so cold?'

It seemed now, as he spoke, so hard a thing to have left unanswered the one she had received, that she did not dare to confess that she had read it.

'I am sorry if I seemed discourteous,' she said in answer; 'I am sorry if you suffered.'

'If I suffered?' cried Val. 'When I thought you disdained my presumption too much to answer by a word! When I have thought so for a month past!'

'I am sorry,' she faltered again.

'Constance!' said Val. 'Heaven knows, I did not seek this meeting!' That was true enough, in a sense; but he had hoped for it, and the nebulous fancy that it might come had led him to the headland. 'But since Fate has thrown me in your way, I will not resist her bidding.

If you don't care for me, and I go on persecuting you in this way, I'm the most horrible cad alive! But I can't help taking the risk. Tell me that you don't care for me at all; tell me that you are happy, and I will go away, and never trouble you again!' How could she tell him to go, when her heart yearned so over him? Yet she made a little struggle still.

'I am very sorry to give you pain,' she murmured.

'Tell me the plain truth,' said Val masterfully. 'If you are happy, send me away. If you care for me, I will never give you up. I will hold you against the world. Tell me the plain truth, and let me go.'

'Mr Strange,' she answered falteringly, 'our paths are ordered for us, and they are wide apart.'

'Not unless you order that it shall be so,' he said doggedly. 'You shall give me a plain answer.'

She had no answer ready. During the whole of their colloquy she had scarcely dared to look at him, and since the talk had become earnest, their eyes had not met once. But now her gaze rose slowly to his face, and though her eyes met his for but a second and were dropped again, the longing in them smote him through and through, and he seized her unresisting hands. 'You love me!' he panted—'you love me!'

What answer could she give him? It was true. Her bosom began to heave, and her cheeks grew pale, and one or two great tears rolled down them.

'Shall we part?' he asked her fiercely. 'Will you wreck two lives? No!' And he cast his arms about her in a mad defiance and strained her to his breast. She was conquered, and she knew it, and he knew it. Yet even then, in the first wild joy of certainty, the world's probable verdict arose before him. Well, he defied it. It was surely better to spoil one life than three—especially when the life to be spoiled was not his, but another's.

But even whilst they stood there, a voice reached their ears, crying 'Constance!' Val released her, and they stood with pale faces looking at each other. The voice was Gerard's, and was not more than a couple of hundred yards away. It was not loud, but modulated a little, as if the lover did not choose altogether to cry out her name, and felt a certain shyness in the act; but in the dead stillness of the summer air they heard it clearly. Then they heard the searcher try another tack. He began to sing, and they knew that *La donna è mobile* was meant to guide the wanderer towards him.

'Go!' said Constance. 'Do not let him find us here.'

'You love me?' questioned Val, half fiercely still.

'Yes,' she answered. 'Go.'

'Come with me,' he whispered; and treading like a thief, he led her round the great boulder under which they had been standing all this time, and by a zigzag way upwards, keeping shelter; and then by a zigzag way downwards, until she saw the Hollow below, through the waving branches of the trees. The voice grew more and more distant as it sang along the little rocky pass.

'Leave me now,' whispered Constance. 'Let me go.'

'You love me? Tell me that you love me.'

'Yes. Let me go.'

'You will write to me. We shall meet soon?'

'Yes.' And she was gone, pausing a while in the wood to compose herself. A moment or two later, she walked serene into the swarded Hollow, and came round the boulder which held down the imprisoned princess of the local fairy tale.

'Where have you been, my dear?' asked motherly Mrs Lumby. 'Gerard has gone away to look for you. Mr Lumby has been asking for you.' And the girl followed Gerard's mother to one of the striped tents where in an arm-chair sat the head of the great House in the City, and smiled and nodded at her in a fashion somewhat childish. It seemed scarcely likely that he would ever recover his old self; but he had mended wonderfully since the beginning of the brighter weather, and knew the faces of his friends. The old man was very fond of Constance, and was never happier than when she and Gerard were near him. He had contrived to make out in a dim way that the great House was not ruined after all; but his comprehension of affairs was like that of a child, and as yet pathetically incomplete. Milly sat smilingly on one side of him, and had been with him all morning, prattling to him of the things he could understand. As she greeted the wrecked old man, a great pang passed through Constance's heart, and she kissed him with tears in her eyes. Motherly Mrs Lumby took this for pity for Gerard's father, born of the girl's love for Gerard, and she kissed Constance warmly; and the old man smiled his heart-breaking childish smile, and said: 'I am glad you are fond of each other.' All this made the position terrible for Constance.

Val, having parted from her, turned his back upon the Hollow, and having wandered a little way, came to a heathery spot, in which he cast himself down and tried to think. His fierce joy had already faded, and he began to face the situation with a sense of fear. Popular opinion was something to him, and he knew that it would be against him. This, of course, gave him no actual pause, but it cooled his triumph. And then there was Gerard, and his stricken father. Val knew how fond the old man had grown of Constance; and he was not a brute, and felt something of the pain he would inflict upon those who had already so keenly suffered. Then Reginald's tongue had lashed Val's foibles once or twice, and he respected the staunch little man's opinion of him, and dreaded his disdain. And one thing was certain. If Val knew anything of human character—and he prided himself, as most men do, on knowing a good deal—he would have a bitter enemy in the man he was robbing. Against Gerard's grief, or possible grief, of course Val's own egotism shielded him. It was better that Gerard should be wounded, than that he himself should. *Cela va sans dire.* Let us not be bitter. We have all thought so in our day, over this matter or that; and if we have never stolen another man's lover from him, why, that may not have been our particular temptation. And perhaps some of us have done, or

attempted even that. Most of us live in glass houses, though we build them of different patterns.

Mechanically, as he lay there in his heathery nook, Val drew out a cigar, struck a fusee, and began to smoke. Gerard's wanderings brought him that way in the course of some five minutes, and the scent of the fusee still lingering heavily on the air, he beat round for the smoker. As he came, he chanted in a deep and jovial bass:

Shepherds, tell me, tell me

Have you seen—have you seen my Celia pass this way?

Checks lily white, lips rosy red—

and the rest of it. There was no touch of fear or suspicion in his mind; and the bright air, the quivering sunflecks, the birds' glad chorale, the dancing leaves, were each and all ministers of pleasure to him. So he threw back his shoulders and opened his chest, and rolled out the air of the glee in a mellow roar like that of an amiable tuneful lion, and came bursting through the boughs on the little clear space where Val lay. The smoker made no effort to escape him this time, and knowing, by the sudden cessation of Gerard's voice, that he was seen, he said, without turning round: 'That you, Lumby?'

'Why, Val, old chum!' cried Gerard joyously, 'I thought you were on the bounding deep, aboard the *Mew's-wing*. What brings you here, you ancient mariner—playing at Diogenes?'

'The master of the confounded craft has got the pip, or something of the sort,' growled Val.

Gerard came and sat beside him, and demanded a cigar. Val supplied him, and lay silent. Here was the first difficulty. If the action he had begun should be carried out—and he had no dream of relinquishing it—Gerard should know. Honour bade, that at least, at least he should tell his rival of his intent, and let him know that his happiness was threatened. But looking at his rival's happy face, he felt too much a coward so to wound him. 'It's like stabbing a sleeping man,' he thought, with an awful inward spasm of reluctance, 'to steal her from him without warning him. I must give him a chance of an appeal. My only possible atonement to him is to tell him openly that he has lost her, and will have to surrender her. If I do that, I can face him. If I don't do it, I am a dastard.' But in spite of the fact that he could speak thus strongly to himself, he could not bring his tongue to speak one word to Gerard.

'Are you come to join our picnic, ancient mariner?' asked Gerard.

'No,' said Val. 'I came out by mere chance for a stroll, and wandered farther than I meant. I have business to see to; and, by the way—drawing out his watch and looking at it—I shall be late already.'

'I must go, too,' said Gerard, bethinking him again of Constance. 'Ta-ta, if you won't come. See you again soon, eh? You'll dance at the wedding on the first of July, won't you?'—Val hid his face and searched his pockets.—'I shall count on you, you know. Good-bye.'

'All right,' cried Val. He could have shot himself for his own baseness. 'Good-bye.'

Gerard was gone, and began his chant again between the whiffs of his cigar: 'Shepherds, tell me, tell me.' The voice died away in the woods; and Val cast himself upon the heather once more. 'Miserable coward!' he cried.

The Primrose Way was scarcely pleasant travelling even now.

REMINISCENCES OF THE MINOR STAGE.

BY AN OLD STAGER.

PART II.*

At the close of a well-remembered day in the early autumn of 1872, I made a pilgrimage to the little village of Chiswick, on the Thames. Living in a garrison town some miles above, where there is noise enough and to spare, I could not fail to be struck with its extreme quietude, considering its close proximity to the busy hive of London. It wears a remote if not antiquated air, and fits pleasantly enough into a preconceived notion of a secluded country hamlet of a century and a half ago. This was my impression, as I leisurely bent my footsteps round the base of the gray old church tower into the adjoining 'God's-acre,' green and sequestered; dotted here and there with flowers, carefully tended by loving hands; and within sound of the long lazy plash of the flowing river at its side. I looked around me curiously to discover the whereabouts of certain forgotten and unremembered worthies, said to lie within its precincts; nor was my search unrewarded. The Earl of Macartney, so well known by his Embassy to China, lies here; as also does Dr Rose, a ponderous if not profound writer in the days when brave Samuel Johnson was king and lawgiver in the literary world of England. Arthur Murphy the dramatist contributes a long and somewhat laboured inscription to his friend's merits and memory. The 'battle of life' has no longer any terrors for the overworked brain of Dr Griffiths, a man of mark in his day as editor of the *Monthly Review*; and James Ralph rests here, quietly oblivious of Pope's stinging satire:

Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous; answer him, ye owls!

Holland, a meritorious actor in Garrick's later period, sleeps peacefully in the immediate neighbourhood of Philip Louthborough, an artist of some repute, more especially as a scene-painter at Drury Lane. The fiery petulance of Ugo Foscolo lies hushed now under a marble slab recording the dates of his birth and death. But the crowning glory of this consecrated rood of earth is the tomb of William Hogarth, a spirit quickened by the immortals to work out their own divine ends.

'I pray you pardon me,' gentle 'companions of my solitude,' for this apparent digression. At present, I am somewhat *distracted*. The theatre and all its belongings are miles away; the floats are unfit, the big drum is nursing his last new baby, and little Tom Nokes—our extra trombone, if you please—is tending his sick wife; even the gasman is conspicuous by his absence; for the simple reason that there is no 'house' to-night. I am on the 'rampage.' I am revelling to my heart's content in the bright sunny atmosphere; the sweet-scented air, blowing gently from the

south, lifts my hair, as looking across the river, I recall some boyish memories of my old school-days, doubly endeared to me now, since one by one 'our fellows' have gone on their destined way and been seen no more.

Whilst I have thus been 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies,' my old dog, tired with his unaccustomed lengthy ramble, has fallen asleep on a diminutive green mound at my feet. I turn curiously to reconnoitre, and am rewarded by the discovery of one of the prettiest little inns it has ever been my fortune to light upon. Sheltered 'by the spreading branches of a chestnut tree,' its bright face glows with splashes of colour; flowers are gleaming from door-sill to roof-tree; every door and window is thrown wide open to catch the drowsy air as it creeps up languidly from the gleaming Thames. I agree with my friend Richard Swiveller, and exclaim aloud that a 'modest quencher' is necessary. Trot—like a sensible dog as he is—leaps up approvingly, pretends to be wide awake with all his might, and makes a feeble attempt at gamboling, which soon subsides as we arrive at the welcome sign of *The Roasted Pippin*. Pippins and ale! The connection is at once both natural and appropriate. A foaming tankard of the real Chiswick brew is placed at my elbow by the good-natured hostess, who also supplies Trot, at his earnest, albeit noisy solicitation, with his favourite Abernethy biscuit. A brier-root is extracted from an inner pocket, lightly filled with the mildest tobacco, and Trot and I cogitate. After a time, Trot affects anxiety, and we pursue our way. Hard by the church is a long narrow lane, branching off in the direction of the Duke of Devonshire's villa, Chiswick House. Originally devoted to the purposes of market-gardening, the ground hereabouts has been partially inclosed—say within the last fifty years—by the enterprising and speculative builder, to meet the exigencies of an increasing population. At the extreme end of this lane, on the left-hand side, stands Hogarth's house and garden, surrounded by a wall of some extent. It is an old-fashioned, red-brick building, of moderate size; but scarcely to be seen from the roadway, by reason of its lower level, and the clustering trees which encompass it.

The present occupier of this house, beneath whose shadow I am standing, is an old friend, was the hero of my boyhood, the *preux chevalier* of my youth, and the intelligent and industrious actor always. His card lies before me now as I write, and the name inscribed thereon is Mr N. T. Hicks. To playgoers thirty years since, the name of this gentleman will be very familiar indeed. As a leading actor on the Surrey side of the water, he was as well known and as popular as any of his theatrical brethren in the West. Habituated from his earliest years to the practice of his art, he obtained a proficiency which enabled him to hold his own with credit and applause.

In those early days when the century was young, the education of an actor meant something. Hard work and indigence were in most cases inseparable. There were no railways, with a cheap third-class for travellers; the professional 'paddled the hoof,' as it was euphemistically termed, from town to town; a small bundle slung on the end of a stick or sword, or an old

* Continued from No. 953.

carpet-bag containing 'props,'—and an extra shirt, if so fortunate—constituted the whole of his luggage. A walk of thirty or forty miles on an empty stomach was by no means uncommon. A lift from a wagon was a godsend. The theatres were widely placed, and difficult of access; from Deal to Norwich or Gloucester on foot demanded all the staying powers of a Captain Barclay or a Weston. Coach-fares were mostly exorbitant, and altogether beyond the ability of the stroller. Happily, most of the younger men in the profession were single, and, as a rule, capable of enduring their hardships with a light heart. But the elder histrions, many of them with wives and families, were reduced to sad straits; provoking a smile now perhaps, after a lapse of years, but very mournful at the time. From the days of Thespis down to this hour, no lasting fame has been gained, no great reputation made, without the help of hard and incessant labour. Talent and energy will grasp the difficulties of the position at once, and by dint of unremitting effort, master them.

I claim for my dear, dead friend the merit of having surmounted these obstacles, of having fought the good fight with manly vigour, and come out of the conflict victorious. Loving his work with passionate ardour, and keenly alive to its delights, the memory of the pain and perils of his progression never forsook him. I remember the particulars of my first interview with him as accurately as though it had only occurred yesterday. I had written to him previously intimating my intention of joining a company, and soliciting his advice. He replied by return of post, explaining how fully his time was occupied, and asking me as a favour to come to him at the theatre. The nautical drama of *The Lost Ship* was then running at the Surrey—the old house, burnt down January 30, 1865—and T. P. Cooke, Mrs. Honner, and Hicks were engaged in playing the principal parts. At the conclusion of this, I made my way round to the stage door, and soon found myself behind the scenes.

I had hardly time to look about me when my friend came. Fresh from the boards, heated, palpitating, quivering with excitement, his first words were, as he grasped my hand: 'Well, my dear sir, in what way can I be of service to you?' Full of confidence in my projected step, I entered with some detail into my proposed arrangements. After patiently listening to me for some time, he laid his hand gently on my shoulder, and looked wistfully into my eyes, as he delivered himself thus: 'You speak well; your appearance is in your favour. But pardon me, what are your present personal circumstances? Are your prospects for the future so unpromising that you fly to the stage as a last resource? You are young, don't seem to be wanting in intelligence; is there no avocation in which your relatives can place you, that will not at least produce the weekly wage of a bricklayer's labourer?'

He paused for a moment, the perspiration all the while streaming down his forehead and face from his recent exertions. So great was my surprise at this exordium, that I could not utter a word. Without taking any notice of my confusion, he continued: 'Excepting under

very peculiar circumstances, I make it a point never to recommend the adoption of a professional career. You are possibly, nay, probably, attracted by the show, the glitter, the music, and the applause. The effect of these accidental accessories is of course patent to all; but the painful efforts rendered necessary to produce them are hidden from the public eye, and thoroughly known to those only whose secret labours are carried on behind the curtain. I doubt if you have counted the cost and consequences of this step. There is no royal road to eminence; the greatest actors have ever been the hardest workers. Have you courage enough to trample down the opposing forces which will as surely beset you as that the sun will rise to-morrow?'

Here we were interrupted by a messenger, who handed my friend a note, with the observation that the bearer waited. Turning aside, with a 'Pardon me,' I was left to myself for a moment; and never shall I forget the revulsion of feeling that ensued. My immature theories thrown to the winds; the ecstatic delights of a career I had set my cast upon, shattered into fragments. I had put to sea in a rudderless vessel and been wrecked. Astounded and bewildered, I sat down with my head between my hands. I was dumb-founded; it appeared like a dream. I could not think. I felt faint, and longed for a breath of the outside air.

In the meantime, my Mentor, now disengaged, came to me, and taking my hand in his as he saw my emotion, spoke in the tenderest manner: 'My dear young friend, I have thought it my duty to put the case clearly before you. At your age, a step in the wrong direction may be fatal. Remember that your success as an actor would demand the devotion of your life; you would have to fight your way inch by inch, and hold your ground as you conquered it.'

I interposed: 'You at least do not seem to have been defeated in the contest.'

Looking sadly at me, he continued: 'No, not altogether; but I have not come out of it unscathed. My wounds are numerous, and deep; my weapons have been hacked and worn, but I have always been carried from the plain on my shield! The love of my profession has been to me both sword and buckler; and if in climbing, the weapon has sometimes failed me, the buckler has always been my shelter and protection. I must leave you now; the stage must not be kept waiting, so fare you well. Think over what I have said, and do not determine rashly.'

And so we parted. Now, 'that I have unlocked my bosom of this perilous stuff' I cannot do less than introduce my long-suffering reader to the gentleman himself, at whose door we have so long been standing.

Ring the bell at the garden wicket, I hear a heavy footfall inside on the paved forecourt; the gate is opened, and once more, after a lapse of many years, I stand face to face with my old mentor, N. T. Hicks. Imagine a man upwards of six feet in his stockings, with athletic limbs in proportion to his height, full neck—left bare—and broad-chested. One of the finest stage faces ever seen; wide brow, surmounted by a thin crop of long light hair, now becoming grizzly; large nose of the Kemble type,

thin lips, and a noble chin, not too prominent; gray eyes, with a tearful and careworn look in them; skin slightly tinged with brown by exposure to the sun, and over all a sad expression. Asking my name, which he does not appear to recollect, I enter the opening in the wall, and make a descent of four or five steps into the garden—Hogarth's garden!

Leading me under the boughs of a huge mulberry tree, planted by the painter himself—now bound together and supported by iron bands and chains—he places himself with his back to the trunk, and scrutinising me narrowly, disclaims all knowledge of my name or person. I enter into particulars; and by degrees some faint light seems to dawn in his memory in connection with our former acquaintanceship. But the effort to recall them evidently gives him pain, and his eyes fill with tears. Taking my arm, we go into the house, where I am introduced to his wife, a gentle-looking lady of good address and breeding. I apologise for my intrusion, and explain its reasons, which she was pleased to accept with a smile of approval. We adjourn to the parlour on the left-hand side of the entrance-hall, a curiously shaped room, full of odd nooks and corners, low in the ceiling, and wainscoted throughout with oak panelling, rendered almost black with age. Here we seat ourselves; and the rays of the setting sun streaming in through the small lattices, impart a glow to the darkened wood as we prepare to indulge in 'the cup that cheers but not inebriates.'

Entering more fully into the object of my visit, I revert to some of my earliest remembrances, by instancing some of the characters which I had seen him personate in my younger days, beginning with the run of the *Jewess* at the Victoria in 1835—that I recollect his playing *Othello* to the Iago of the elder Cobham, in the year following at the same theatre—that, on a particular occasion, I had seen and heard him greeted with a loud and prolonged hiss—which mark of disapprobation I took to be one of the grandest testimonies to his talent that I could call to mind. The occasion was this. On the presentation of Moncrieff's version of *Jack Sheppard* in October 1839, he enacted the character of Jonathan Wild; Harding, a young man of good ability, being the Jack; Dale, the Sir Rowland Trenchard; and Manders, Kneebone. Let it be understood that Hicks was the leading actor of the company, and on the best of terms with his audience, and that, moreover, the absurd practice of hissing a performer because he happens to be cast for the villain of the piece had not yet come into vogue, and you will imagine the surprise with which this involuntary expression of feeling was received. The rapacious cruelty of the part had been so forcibly portrayed during the progress of the drama, that when, in the concluding scene, under the 'Tyburn tree' the mob are wildly gesticulating and jeering, the audience in front caught up the cry and added to the tumult. For an instant the amazed actor turned to the audience to learn what was amiss, when the clamour immediately altered its character to the loudest applause. 'Bravo, Hicks!' He had forgotten the incident; but looked pleased at my remembrance, and thanked me for recalling it.

In searching the annals of theatrical biography, it is by no means rare to find that the representation of some particular character has become so far identified with the actor's name, that the casual mention of the one almost invariably recalls the other. As thus: Garrick with *Richard III.*, Kemble with *Coriolanus*, Kean with *Othello*, Macready with *Virginius*, Mackay with the 'Bailie' in *Rob Roy*, Denzil with *Manfred*, and T. P. Cooke with *Black-eyed Susan* as William. This list might be lengthened considerably if it were necessary. Suffice it, however, to add one other name to the catalogue in the person of N. T. Hicks with *The Wizard of the Wave*. The Victoria had passed into the hands of a Mr Richard Ratcliffe in 1840, who signalled his advent by the production of a nautical drama bearing the above title, furnished by J. T. Haines. This was placed upon the stage with the utmost completeness, and supported by a company which did ample justice to its merits. Hicks performed the dual parts of Captain Faulkner and the Unknown; John Dale, Don José; Harding, Tom Truck—an admirable bit of acting; Attwood, Timothy Treacle; Miss Emmeline Montague—who afterwards became Mrs Compton—was the Donna Isabinda. Coney and Blanchard, the noted swordsmen, were also engaged, and did excellent service. The pictorial illustrations were fine and appropriate; but the last scene culminated in a triumph of stage mechanism such as had never been seen in any theatre within my experience.

Our prolonged meal concluded, my friend and I stroll out of doors into the well-kept garden. I reverted to the memory of many of the elder favourites of the public with whom he had been associated, canvassing their merits and debating their peculiarities. Liberal in his judgments, he was at the same time keenly alive to the sameness, the mannerisms of certain of his compeers. How lovingly he dwelt on the dramatic eminence of G. V. Brooke, George Bennett, Thomas Lyon, Charles Pitt, and Samuel Phelps! The combative faculty which not unusually accompanies a highly nervous temperament, had died out, and left behind it no shadow of envy or uncharitableness.

How well do I remember all the trifling incidents of that evening, little dreaming it was to be the last I should enjoy in the society of my friend on this side of the dark and ever-flowing river. I could not avoid remarking that my later edition of professional small-talk, and the occasional quip and crank with which we larded our lean conversation, were received with extra warmth. The sweet face of his good and lady-like wife also brightened with enhanced pleasure as we sat under the porch indulging in our quiet gaiety. In illustration of some of his anecdotes, he placed before me a large portfolio containing various portraits, letters of celebrities, and newspaper cuttings, about each of which, as they came under notice, he had some observation to make, or some history to relate. With a promise that I would shortly renew my visit, he followed me out of doors to the garden steps, where we parted. My town engagements being particularly pressing at this season, I could not find time so soon as I had expected to visit him again; but, buoyed up with the

hope of his returning convalescence, was less uneasy on that account than hitherto. But the receipt of a black-edged envelope bearing the post-mark of Chiswick roused my worst fears, which a perusal of the contents confirmed. My friend was dead; the lamp, long glimmering, had ceased to burn. No more the tender welcome greeting from his honest eyes! The picturesque manner, and the eloquent voice, which of old roused my young enthusiasm, lie buried out of sight; but the memory of them remains written legibly on the hidden tablets of the heart. Newton Treen Hicks died February 21, 1873, aged 62. 'To this complexion must we come at last.'

THE CLIFFORD DIAMONDS.

CHAPTER III.—WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

NAOMI came home a few days afterwards, and, as usual, we had some talk about the friends we knew at Liverpool; a word or two on dress, and then—

'Naomi, there has been a letter from Arthur Clifford,' I said.

She started, just ever so little, and grew a shade paler; but her voice was perfectly steady as she asked: 'And what news of him?'

'He is coming home.'

'I thought as much,' she said with a little laugh.

'But he is not coming back alone, Naomi,' I whispered very low.

She turned quickly upon me. 'What do you mean, Olive?' she said, her lips quivering.

'I mean—I mean—Oh, Naomi, surely, surely you know the kind of man he is—that he is not to be trusted.'

'Tell me at once!' she cried, catching my arm. 'Tell me at once, Olive!'

'He is married, Naomi.'

She started up, and stood for a moment as if transfixed with amazement; then breaking into a low ringing laugh of bitter scorn, she said: 'So some one else will wear the diamonds after all!' It was the only word of anything like disappointment I ever heard pass her lips.

To this day it is a puzzle to me. Did she care for him or not? Was it only ambition which prompted her to reject so many suitors for his sake? Had she resolved to be Lady Clifford at all hazards, and was her heart untouched? I never knew; I never can know; we never speak of those things now.

Although Sir Arthur told his mother he was on his way home, the summer was on the wane before he brought his bride to Grange. There were no public demonstrations, no illuminations, no rejoicings. Lady Clifford (*née* Scadder) just drove quietly from the railway station in a one-horse brougham, and arrived amongst us as simply as if we had known her from childhood. I was at Grange that day; Naomi was again at Liverpool. She managed to be absent in just the most natural way in the world. No one thought it strange; I only, held the clew.

Arthur Clifford was terribly changed. The years he had spent in America had altered him almost beyond belief. It was not that he was bronzed or browned, although he was both one

and the other; not that his good looks were terribly impaired, although that also was the case. But there was a curious look about him, which told of wild company, of his having been in the society of reckless men; a flavour of rowdiness, very unlike the ease and courtesy of an English gentleman. But his wife was perfectly lovely—fair, delicately formed, slight, and graceful as a harebell. Her azure eyes, daintily chiselled features, pearly teeth, skin, resembled nothing so much as an exquisite Dresden china shepherdess. She charmed me at a glance. I had often heard of the delicate beauty of American women; but this was altogether a surprise to me. True, she had many little ways about her which were scarcely in accordance with our received ideas of the proprieties; and Sir Arthur's mother was not pleased at her voice or accent. But she seemed to possess entire sway over her husband; and so far as I could see during that first visit of hers to Grange, she was a shrewd little person, and had all her wits about her. Sir Arthur and she only remained ten days at Grange. She told us she was very sorry; but her cousin, Mayflower Scadder, was going to marry a Russian Prince with an unpronounceable name; and she had promised to be at the grand wedding in Paris. 'All the world will be there,' she said to me; 'and I'm having a gown made for it that will beat all creation.' She seemed to have taken a wonderful liking for me; and when she uttered—as now—any of her Americanisms, which she saw startled me, she would laugh or blush, and ask me if we English thought her queer. So we became quite confidential, and I think that I may have been in a very small way of use to her.

Early in September, she and her husband left for Paris. She took the diamonds with her.

'That's a clever little woman,' Uncle Tom said to me one day, shortly after young Lady Clifford and her husband had left. I was surprised, for Uncle Tom never came near Grange while Sir Arthur was there, and I did not know of his having met the young lady. I said as much.

The old man laughed. 'Oh, she came down to the Mills and made my acquaintance, my dear,' he said. 'Went all over the factory, asked questions about everything; and really she seems to be a most intelligent little body. She was very eager about the mineral wealth of the place. Mark my words, Olive: you'll see the coal-pits opened before a year goes round, or I am much mistaken.'

I did not think very much of his words just then; but when an agent from London came down and began to examine the bleak moors between Grange and the sea, and when queer-looking implements began arriving at the small station near, I found the truth of what he said. Lady Clifford was not a woman to suffer her thousands and tens of thousands to lie idle; she would make good use of her wealth, and every pound must turn into forty shillings. I suppose she was right; but to me there seemed to be a terrible greed about this headlong race after wealth. I may have done her wrong. Now, I know that I did, and I am sorry.

Spring was beginning, bleak and cold, as it

usually begins with us in our hard north, when Sir Arthur and my lady returned home. Ruth was at Grange; but at once she resigned the reins of government into the clever hands of the little American; and capital hands they proved to be. She was born to govern, that fair, slight, childish-looking woman; and uncle, who condoned her husband's crime for the sake of his beautiful wife, told me more than once that he had never met a woman with such a head for business. She was at everything, seen everywhere; nothing escaped her keen eyes, or baffled her acute penetration. Moreover, from her exceeding beauty, her known cleverness, and her reputed wealth, she became the most popular little woman in the west of England.

The Cliffords were a good deal asked out that year. After Easter, they went to London, and a Countess presented the little American at the last drawing-room of the season. She was wonderfully admired; in fact, she became the fashion; and Sir Arthur became to the world 'Lady Clifford's husband.' I believe Naomi and he met once or twice in society in London, but I never inquired about it. It was a subject upon which there was silence between us.

In August, the lady and her husband returned home. The admiration she had received had not in the slightest degree spoilt the little beauty; she was just the same shrewd, practical young woman as ever, with an eye on everything, a finger in every pie; and Sir Arthur never interfered with her. He and I seldom encountered one another; by tacit consent, we kept out of each other's way; and although his wife and I were great friends, I scarcely ever exchanged more than a passing word with him; neither did Uncle Thomas nor my father have any intercourse with him; and whispers of debasing habits learned abroad, and practised in secret, began to circulate amongst the people. For my own part, I hardly know if they were or were not true. I remembered the avidity with which he drank up uncle's wine years ago, and I shuddered. Everything outwardly seemed to flourish with the Cliffords. The mines were now in full work, and the yield of coal exceeded the wildest dreams of the proprietors; wealth seemed pouring in upon them.

The presence of the younger lady at Grange made but little change in our intercourse with our dear Lady Clifford; and I observed with deep joy, how the elder's prejudices were gradually wearing away, and how the younger was slowly winning her way to her mother-in-law's heart. I have said that young Lady Clifford was very popular in our part of the world. Even at the Duke's, she was the reigning belle; and it was whispered that a great ball which he was to give at Beckley Towers about Christmas, was chiefly in honour of her.

This ball at the Duke's was the theme of every tongue for many weeks before it came off. Invitations were sent to us; and as Joe, Harry, and Naomi were all at home and wild to go, I promised to go too.

Lady Clifford was staying at Beckley Towers; while we humble individuals were content to drive the long fifteen miles on a winter's night. The ballroom was a sight to see, with its artistic decorations and gorgeous dresses. The company

was most distinguished, even counting a Royal personage in its number, with dozens of celebrities besides. Ere I was half an hour inside the flower-wreathed door, I had encountered half-a-dozen acquaintances, which made things exceedingly pleasant to me; amongst the number was an old clergyman, a dear friend of my father's, and with him I made the circuit of the gorgeous rooms and superb galleries. It was a real pleasure to go with him, because he knew all the famous pictures and could point them out to me.

'There are some fine Van Dycks at Grange,' he said, pausing before a splendid portrait by that master. 'But I think this is the finest specimen of him in the north of England.—By the way, have you seen Lady Clifford to-night? She is quite the loveliest woman in the room; and her dress is a marvel.'

I felt amused at the old clergyman's simple admiration for the young American; but when I saw her afterwards, dancing with the Royal personage, and attracting quite as many eyes as he, I did not wonder. She wore the celebrated diamonds—the diamonds which I had seen under such different circumstances a few years ago. They seemed to create a luminous circle around her, glittering on her fair head, her slender throat, her shapely arms and bosom, and starring the puffed and looped folds of her pale pink brocade dress. No wonder every one looked at her. There was not one amongst the number who could bear comparison with her. We had just a few whispered words together, and I lost sight of her in the crowd.

I was terribly tired after that ball, and resolved that it should be my last; nevertheless, I had enjoyed it after a fashion, and certainly I amused dear old Lady Clifford for three whole days with my account of it and of her lovely daughter-in-law's success.

On the fourth day after the ball, Sir Arthur and his beautiful wife returned home; and on the evening of their return I got about the greatest surprise of my life. Just as I was preparing for our family dinner, a tiny note from Lady Clifford, requesting me to go to her at once, was put into my hand.

'Her ladyship's sent the brougham,' my maid told me; 'and the man says he's not to go back without you.'

Feeling certain that something ominous had occurred, I wrapped a cloak round me and drove to Grange. I was shown into the smaller drawing-room much as usual, and found Sir Arthur, his wife, and mother waiting dinner, also in the most usual fashion.

'Oh, you're come, dear,' cried the younger lady in her effusive manner. 'So glad—so very glad to see you. Now we'll have a good time together and discuss the ball in real style.'

I felt mystified. Surely she never had sent for me in such an urgent fashion only to have a gossip about the ball. I failed to understand her. I remained in a state of puzzle all through dinner and for some time after it, until the elder lady having gone to her rooms, and Sir Arthur being left to the company of the wine-bottle, the little lady brought me into her boudoir, closed fast the door, and facing me, said with a slight laugh: 'Olive, I've lost the diamonds.'

I staggered back and gasped for breath. 'Lost the diamonds?' I faltered. 'Lost?'

'Yes, yes. They were stolen out of my room at Beckley. Isn't it awkward?' She seemed to me to take it much more easily than I could. To me, the loss of those splendid jewels seemed something almost overwhelming, while to her it was only 'awkward.'

'It is a terrible misfortune,' I said.

She laughed one of her gay, little, bird-like laughs. 'Oh! as for that, they can be easily replaced; but it is rather awkward to lose them just now.'

I had heard of American recklessness, American extravagance; but to meet with such an example of it in her, in this clever managing little woman, who seemed to look so sharply after everything, almost took away my breath. I felt cruelly disappointed in her.

'To a person of your enormous wealth,' I said coldly, 'the loss of a suit of diamonds worth twenty or thirty thousand pounds may seem a trifle, as you can so easily replace them; but to my mind.'—

She stopped me short by flinging her arms around me and kissing me heartily. 'O Olive, don't, don't!' she cried, laughing aloud. 'You'll kill me, Olive; yes, you will. But—how were you to know? I hoodwinked you with the rest of them. Now I'll make a full confession. You're real grit, Olive Thorp, gold through and through; and you'll like me better for being honest and true with you. Sit down there, and listen to me. I don't want to make a fuss about those diamonds, or have any talk over them, because—because'—

She stopped, and her beautiful face flushed up. Then she leant forward till her face almost touched mine, and whispered: 'Because they ain't the real ones!'

I sat staring at her for a few moments. 'Not—the—real—ones?' I gasped at last, horror-stricken.

'No; they are not. The real ones are at Cannes with Mayflower, safe and sound. I sold them to her, and had these made in imitation of them.—Oh, don't look so horrified. Arthur knew the whole affair from first to last. I wouldn't have done it without his consent for a hundred worlds; but—Didn't you always think I had lots of cash?'

I said I was led to believe as much.

She shook her little head. 'Bless you, I hadn't a cent, not I. It was Mayflower had the fortune. Uncle Pete died worth I can't tell you how much. One half he left to Mayflower, and the other half to her brother Devereux. Poor Mayflower! her appearance is ordinary beyond thought, but she is clever and quick. We were prime friends, and we never got jealous of each other. I reckon we got our share fair enough. She had the fortune, and I had the face. We were staying together in an hotel at Brooklyn, when Arthur and I came across each other. He thought I had the fortune, at first, and made up to me.—No, no; I didn't deceive him. I got too fond of him, poor old fellow; and he behaved like a man—he did indeed.'

She looked into the fire for a moment or two contemplatively; then she went on: 'He told me he was very poor, and that if he had a

little money, he could grow as rich as the best of us. First, I thought about getting Mayflower to lend us money to start the mines; then Arthur told me of the necklace and all the rest. I spoke to Mayflower on the spot. She offered me the highest market price for the diamonds; and I took it. So we came to Europe; and in Paris we met a cousin of ours that was married to an Austrian Count; she got us there to her house in the Champs-Élysées, and before you knew where you were, produced this sleek Russian Prince, and made up a match for Mayflower. He's a good fellow, though, and kind to Mayflower. They are at Cannes now; and she's as happy as need be.'

'Well, when I went over to the wedding, I took the diamonds to a celebrated man in Paris who can imitate such things so that no one could know the difference between the mock ones and the real; and he copied the Clifford diamonds for me for a mere trifle compared to the value of the real ones; and Mayflower gave me down in hard cash forty-four thousand pounds sterling, for the lot. Then we started the mines; and now we are getting rich in reality, and have everything we want. Isn't that better than having a lot of grandeur locked up in a box doing good to nobody? Eh, Olive? We are giving work to over three hundred men, improving the place, spending a good deal amongst the poor folks, and all just because we sold these old diamonds. I'm practical, you see. But I don't want a fuss made. I wish the thief joy of these stolen nake-believes.'

I grew to like her better after that confession of hers than I ever had done before; and as the years went on, and I, her most intimate friend, saw the heavy cross laid upon her in her domestic life, and how bravely she bore it, I came to love and honour her above all the women I knew. As for Sir Arthur, he sank lower and lower, not swiftly or suddenly, but with a slow and sure decline, until, despite his brave little wife's efforts to uphold him in the eyes of the world, men talked publicly of his disgrace, and the sins of his youth were remembered against him. At last, he died, leaving his widow dowered more amply than any Lady Clifford had ever been before. She was still in the heyday of life, good-looking and attractive; but she never married again, devoting herself solely to the young Sir Jasper Clifford, her handsome boy, who would succeed to all the wealth she had made, and his beautiful sister Ida, who inherited much of her mother's spirit. Lady Clifford lived on at Grange until her blind mother-in-law's death; and soon afterwards she and I went on our travels together. All my people were married then. My three brothers had homes and families of their own, and Naomi too had married. Hers was the strangest marriage of them all, for her husband is no other than the Devereux Scadder whose sister possessed the famous Clifford diamonds. He is a fine fellow, devoted to Naomi, for whose pleasure he has built a charming villa close to his sister at Cannes.

Once, just last year, I saw those diamonds again. It was at Rome, at a reception given by the Princess Ivan Doughrousky, *nee* Mayflower Scadder. The little brown, beady-eyed woman

seemed lost in the blaze of them; and I could not help thinking they were very useless things after all.

VINTAGE-TIME.

OLD Father Rhine was bearing his share of the last contingent of summer travellers to their various homes. These included the ubiquitous American; the grave and solemn Russian; the portly German with wife and family, who, having soused themselves thoroughly at some watering-place, were wending their way back to their *sauerkraut* and indigestion; and lastly, many a son and daughter of Albion, whose healthy happy faces, bronzed by Alpine and Italian suns, showed that they had not been wasting the summer in idleness or in drinking 'drumlie German water.' The towns and villages were reaping the last of their annual spoils from the tourists; the air was filled with the scent of ripening fruit; the steamers and river-barges were piled high with baskets of apples and pears; and the last of the great rafts from the Black Forest with its floating village, moved silently down the majestic river towards the sea. A rich harvest was in store for the Rhinelander. The destructive night-frosts of May had not molested his vines this year; a warm and generous June had helped them through the precarious season of blossom; a broiling August sun had ripened the fruit, and a beautiful September had brought the grapes to perfection. Autumn had already changed the green of the leaves into the richest of yellows and reds and browns; but these gorgeous tints failed to conceal the deep blue purple of the ripe clusters beneath, which lent their colour to the mountain-sides. Mountain and valley glowed in the richest of autumnal tints, the reflection of which was taken up by the deep flowing river, and mirrored back on its constantly changing surface.

The whole Rhineland population was in a state of anxious excitement, and all hopes and fears were centred in the one question—the weather. Rain at this critical period would blight all the hopes a glorious summer had raised. The vintage does not take place simultaneously all along the Rhine; indeed, weeks often intervene between the gathering of the grapes in various districts; and in the Rheingau, where grow the wines which render the names of Johannisberg, Steinberg, Rüdesheim, &c., justly famous, the gathering-in is often so long delayed, that it is only approaching winter which hurries the housing of the grapes. In other districts, where vineyards unknown to general fame yield good and generous wines that later on adopt the names of their more famous sisters, the day for commencing the vintage is fixed by the local magnates, among whom the village burgomaster and the larger proprietors stand supreme.

At the village of H—, the local magnate was indeed a portly person, credited with being able to drink several gallons of wine daily. He was a short, thick-set man about five feet high, and about as many in circumference, dressed in a blue linen blouse, blue linen trousers, and a blue

cowl on his head. His broad face vied in its reds and purples with the colouring of the richest cluster of grapes; and his small sharp twinkling eyes floated in two welling lakes of tears. The way in which this village oracle, constantly buried in clouds of tobacco-smoke, gave forth his autocratic utterances, and then lapsed instantly into the severest silence, was well calculated to impress the peasantry with a sense of his unfathomable wisdom. Almost every village possesses some such magnate, who, grown up in their midst, knows everything about everybody, and possessed of a little more than average shrewdness, is looked to for advice in almost every emergency. He acts as arbitrator in small matters of dispute; and many little squabbles and quarrels are prevented from growing into lengthy matters of litigation by his fair and equitable administration of justice. The oracle had fixed the following day for the commencement of the vintage, many an anxious eye was turned towards the glowing heavens, and every little cloud was scanned as it floated across and melted into space. The evening promised well, and the quiet romance pervading everything was delightful as we watched the signs of the night from among the moonlit ruins of the old Schloss on the top of the mountain. To the south lay the ancient town of Andernach, with its old old towers and spires, bathed in the softest moonlight, guarding the entrance of the gorge. The villages below lay hushed in sleep, and no sound broke the solemn stillness but the gentle murmuring of the mighty river as it rolled along.

Daybreak came, and found everybody up and busy. Old and young—the wealthy proprietor with his guests and friends, for everybody who has friends and has house-room to offer them asks them to join in helping at vintage-time; the peasant who with his children cultivates a few odd patches of ground—all are dressed in blue linen, the women in short blue gowns, the men in blue blouses and trousers. Armed with knives, shears, clippers, of all dimensions and shapes, some carrying great wicker baskets lined with pitch, and called *Lehne*, they moved off to the mountain-sides. The women carry the *Lehne* on their heads; the men carry them on their left shoulders, and support them with a thick crooked stick. When full, these *Lehne* weigh upwards of a hundredweight, and are often borne over the roughest and rockiest of tracks for miles. Oxen were yoked to huge lumbering wagons, on which were placed vats. These toiled up the precipitous paths to every accessible point among the terraced vineyards. In the pressing-houses in the village, all was bustle and activity. Vats were being rapidly prepared to receive the grapes; huge casks were placed upright, with the top ends taken out; crushers and stampers got a final cleaning; and weighing-machines were placed in readiness to record the weight of the various baskets as they were brought in. Those who remained in the village were all awaiting the first arrival of the grapes from the mountain-sides, when suddenly a cold draught of air swept down through the narrow gorge of the Rhine—the tolling of distant bells was wafted warningly on the breeze from village to village, and down came a dense white damp fog, burying mountain and

river in its gray vapoury folds. The bells of the village church at H— joined in the ringing lament which summoned the workers back from the vineyards. All gathering operations must cease when this wet fog comes down. Apart from the actual danger to those employed in collecting the grapes, the air becomes so impregnated with moisture, that the grapes in a few minutes are covered with large beads of water. Were they gathered in this state, the produce would be as much deteriorated as if the grapes were gathered in a pelting rain. The burgomaster, in the interest of the community, and to preserve the good name of the district, causes the village bells to summon all to cease gathering. For those high up on precipitous ledges of rock where the vine loves to grow, such a fog brings its own element of danger, and lucky are they if they can reach safe ground before the mist renders each step one of peril.

A couple of hours elapsed. Groups of anxious people wistfully watched the cold wet fog as it swept slowly by, at times dense and impenetrable, at others thin and vapoury, exposing for a second or so the pale disc of the sun as it struggled through. These were two anxious hours. If the fog rose, rain was inevitable; whereas if the fog fell to the earth, a fine day was certain. At length the question was happily settled. The vapoury masses collected in the hollows of the mountains, the blue sky appeared overhead, and the sun burst forth triumphantly. With happy faces and gladsome songs, the people once more streamed forth to the vineyards, and for that day they had no interruption to fear. Soon the heavily filled baskets began to arrive, and the fruit was eagerly scanned. Very different indeed were these bunches and clusters of grapes from what one is accustomed to see on the table in England, and a poor figure these little shrivelled-up berries would make beside the produce of an English vineyard. Their value, however, does not lie in their looks, in the ordinary acceptance of the term. The thick saccharine juice they contain—the result of excessive ripeness—the deep-red hue of the stalks and stems of the clusters—these are what call forth the admiration of those who know what such juice will yield.

The first baskets had hardly been in the pressing-house a few minutes, before the happy vintner came forth and told us that the must-tester floated higher than it had been known to do for years. This meant that there was more saccharine matter in the juice of the pressed grapes than had been known for years. Next he came with a small flat silver cup to taste the must, the shallow cup and brightness of the metal enabling you to judge of the colour. And now men and women began to arrive in greater numbers; wagons came lumbering heavily laden from the vineyards. Crushing and pressing went on briskly in the pressing-houses all day long. Occasionally some of the bearers themselves toppled over into the vats as they emptied their heavy baskets, and had to be extricated, sticky and dejected, by their laughing comrades. All mouldy and rotten bunches have to be removed; and sometimes it is necessary to ascertain that some of those who bring in their produce do not add water. As a rule, the Rhinelanders are honest; but there are black-sheep among them, who have been clever enough to find out

that one pound-weight of water is equal to one pound of grapes, and costs less.

The gathering of the grapes in the vineyards ceased at about half-past five p.m. for the day; and charming it was to listen to the happy voices of the people in the soft balmy air, at first distant and low, but gradually approaching nearer and nearer, and bursting out into rich melody as they descended from the echoing hills to their village homes. In the vineyards, the work was over for the day; but not so in the pressing-houses. The ripeness of the fruit caused fermentation to set in immediately; and as simultaneous and regular fermentation is of essential importance in the making of good wine, all the gathered grapes must be crushed and vatted without delay. No individual berries must be left to burst of themselves later on, and thus disturb the harmony of the fermentation. The old method of stamping the grapes with the feet, though still practised in the south of Europe, has long since died out on the Rhine. The crushing is here effected by passing the grapes through large revolving rollers. The great care which has to be taken in the cultivation of the vine on the Rhine, owing to the changeable climate, and the constant nursing required to bring the extremely delicate wines to maturity, have brought the science of viticulture to the highest perfection. The high prices paid to the growers for their produce is sufficient proof of this.

Knowledge gained by long experience is the only guide in selecting and arranging the grapes suitable to be allowed to ferment together. The wind and cooler air to which the vines on the higher mountain slopes are exposed, influence the fruit materially; the excessive moisture, on the other hand, to which the lower lying vineyards are subjected by the drainage from the hills, increases the quantity of the wine, but does so at the expense of the quality. As a rule, the finest wines are prepared from grapes grown half-way up the mountain-side. A great many considerations arise among others as to whether stems and husks should be allowed to ferment with the juice; but as regards this, no rule can be laid down, and only patient watching and experience enable one to judge with any degree of accuracy. Temperature, again, is of vital importance; but a knowledge of when to arrest and how to control fermentation can only be gained by practical experience in the pressing-houses.

The hard work of the first few days of the vintage did not allow of much merry-making; but the bright faces, the cheerful 'Guten Morgen' with which one was greeted everywhere, the joyous singing, sufficed to show that the spirit of thankfulness was abroad. As the days went on, and the work became lighter, the big room and the gardens surrounding the village inn became thronged with people; fiddles, trombones, violoncellos, and every available musical instrument, were brought into requisition; while mine host, who had taken time by the forelock, had already brimming bumpers of newly made wine to offer to his guests. Dancing and merry-making were carried on far into the night. For these people, a good vintage means a provision for months to come; the demon of want and starvation has been driven from their doors; winter may come

with its keenest blasts—they are prepared, and they are happy; and their happiness and content are a genuine thanksgiving for the abundance showered upon the land.

A MYSTERY OF THE PACIFIC.

FAR away in the South Pacific Ocean, stretching from the coast of Asia for thousands of miles to the east, there extends a vast series of archipelagoes and island groups, partly, without doubt, the remains of a former continent now merged beneath the waves. Here is the far-famed Coral Sea, with its countless islets and calm lagoons; and here are numberless volcanic islands, rich in luxuriant vegetation, where Nature seems to have been especially prodigal of her gifts, but which are ever the sport of the terrible subterranean forces that act with such fearful potency throughout all this region. Till comparatively recent times, little was known for certain with respect to the islands of the Pacific. Mendana and other pioneers of exploration had, it is true, shed some light on the subject; but the tales of early travellers were mixed up with many wild improbabilities and exaggerations. Dim stories floated about of the savage nature of the South Sea Islanders, and of the exploits of Dampier or of the Spanish buccaners. Tales, too, of the fabulous wealth to be derived from trading in the Pacific, found ready listeners everywhere; and the public credulity on the subject was too clearly shown in the history of the South Sea Bubble.

Of late years, through the discoveries of gallant explorers, we have learned more of the true facts of the case, and many old illusions have been dispelled. But, as has been so often said, truth is stranger than fiction; and the facts to which we are about to draw attention will yield in their wonderful nature to none of the strange and fantastic tales with which sea-captains were formerly wont to astonish the credulous at home.

In the far East, forming, as it were, the outpost of the South Sea groups, is a solitary volcanic island called Easter Island. It is thirteen hundred miles east of Pitcairn, the next island in the series, and, with the exception of Sala y Gomez, a small rock without inhabitants or vegetation, there is no land between it and South America, which lies more than two thousand miles to the east. Easter Island is only eleven miles long by four broad; yet in this small space is crowded perhaps the most wonderful and mysterious collection of remains of a prehistoric people to be found on the earth. At the south-west end are nearly a hundred houses, built of stone, with walls five feet in thickness. The inside of the walls is lined with upright slabs of stone, painted in black, white, and red, with figures of animals and birds, and with other designs. The houses are roofed in with overlapping slabs of stone. In some of the houses, numbers of univalve shells have been found. Near these wonderful ruins, the rocks are carved into fantastic shapes or faces, most of the sculptures being now almost overgrown with bush and underwood. The present inhabitants know nothing whatever of these houses, which, existing as they do in such large

numbers, seem to point inevitably to a former race of natives of far higher civilisation.

We can understand that a former race may have erected the houses and carved the sculptures mentioned above, wonderful as they are compared with the huts of the existing natives. What follows is, however, more difficult of explanation. On nearly every promontory are erected huge stone platforms, facing the sea, and presenting a front sometimes nearly three hundred feet long and from twenty to thirty feet high. The stones composing these platforms are often six feet long, and are fitted together without cement. The top of the platform is generally about thirty feet broad; and the structures being built on sloping ground, the wall facing the interior of the island is only about a yard high. Another terrace, a hundred feet broad, is levelled landwards, and ends also in a wall of stone. On these immense platforms are great pedestals of stone, on which once stood gigantic statues, which, however, are now all thrown down and partially mutilated, with the exception of those on the platform near the crater of Otouli, which are still erect. Some of these images were thirty-seven feet high; but the average height was about sixteen or seventeen feet, other statues being much smaller. The heads of these sculptured images are flat, and were formerly capped by crowns of red tufa, a stone that is found only at a crater called Terano Han, near which have been found a number of crowns ready for removal to the statues. The faces are square, and are said to be of a disdainful expression, the lips thin, and the eye-sockets remarkably deep, perhaps to admit of the insertion of eyeballs formed of obsidian, which is also found on the island.

Captain Cook, who during his second voyage visited Easter Island, remarks that the shade of one of these statues was sufficient to shelter all his party—nearly thirty persons. He believed them to be burying-places for certain tribes or families. But whatever may have been the original intention of the sculptors, the present natives can have had nothing to do with the execution of these wonderful monuments. They possess, however, small wooden carved figures, but totally different in features from the stone images. We are forced to the conclusion that the houses, platforms, and statues are all relics of a remote age. The natives have a tradition that they formerly migrated to their present abode from one of the islands of the Low Archipelago; but this throws little light on the subject. How, in any age, could a people furnished only with a stone chisel—for the Polynesians are still in the Stone epoch—have carved such statues by hundreds and built such enormous platforms? And the difficulty is immensely increased by the small size and complete isolation of the island. At present, Easter Island remains the greatest mystery of the Pacific—one of the great mysteries of the world.

The ruins of Ponapé, however, are scarcely more easily explained than those we have been describing. Ponapé is one of the Caroline Islands, and is about fourteen miles long by twelve in width. On the bank of a creek in the Metalanien harbour stands a massive wall three hundred feet in length and about thirty-

five feet high. It is built of basalt, the stones being in some cases twenty-five feet long. On passing through a gateway in this wall, a court, inclosed by walls thirty feet high, is reached. This court is now almost hidden in parts by luxuriant vegetation; but on investigation, a terrace eight feet high and twelve broad is found to run round the inside of the inclosing wall. Low walls running north and south divide the court into three parts, in the centre of each of which is a closed chamber fourteen feet square, roofed over with basaltic columns.

The labour of building these structures must have been enormous, for there are no basaltic rocks within ten miles, with an intervening country thickly wooded and precipitous. Such an exploit is evidently entirely out of the power of the present savage inhabitants. The theory that the buildings were the work of Spanish buccaneers is also untenable. No adequate explanation has yet been offered; but, as in the case of Easter Island, we seem driven to the hypothesis of an ancient civilisation extending over some parts at least of the Pacific. Admitting this, we might suppose that Easter Island was chosen, possibly expressly on account of its isolation, as the sanctuary of the religion of some confederacy or group of tribes, who might by their joint labours have produced the mighty structures which now baffle the archaeologist. On the same supposition, the buildings at Ponapé might be considered to have been the temple of the gods of some powerful nation. But all this is mere conjecture. If there ever was such a civilisation, which way did it spread? Was it from the West or from the East? And in either case, how can we account for its spontaneous growth in such an isolated region and under conditions so unfavourable? These are questions which we cannot hope to answer; probably they will always remain unanswered. The past history of the South Seas is veiled in deep obscurity. Could we but gain an insight into the remote past of this quarter of the globe, perhaps a picture would be revealed, by the side of which the tales of Montezuma and the Incas of Peru would sink into insignificance.

CIVILISED GAME.

When we see the familiar pheasant on the table at meals, we take it for granted that until it fell a victim to the breech-loader of some fortunate sportsman, it was a simple child of nature. It is quite as likely, however, that it was not. Few people perhaps are aware of the thousands of these birds that are raised by hand, in order to provide an ample supply for those sportsmen who like to kill birds without having too much trouble in hunting for them. A great deal of labour is expended in furnishing such game. The business of rearing the birds from eggs, under the domestic hen, involves careful supervision by day and night on the part of a staff of experienced keepers, who, in the beginning, have also no little hard work to do in collecting the eggs. Besides the danger the little birds run of being stolen and sold to some neighbouring estate, they are also liable to be destroyed by weasels, stoats, and rats. Even the

jackdaw, from a pure love of mischief, will bite off their heads if he gets the opportunity.

In the case of the baby pheasants, they will not, until they are ten days old at least, enter the carefully boarded wire-run in front of their coops; and have to be fed upon a delicate mixture of finely chopped egg and meal. Even after they are strong enough to roam about, the keeper is compelled to maintain a sharp look-out when the day is wet, as the long damp grass often proves fatal to their constitution. Until the age of two months is reached, when they are turned into the woods, the pheasants have to be fed five times a day; and a vigilant watch must be kept at night, as they are liable to be pounced upon both by two-legged and four-legged thieves.

'DAME AUTUMN HATH A MOURNFUL FACE.'

SUMMER is dead : too soon her radiant shape
Beneath a humid pall of leaves is laid ;
Too soon is fled the swallow, to escape
The biting wind, and winter's cruel shade.

Summer is dead : the weeping forest tree
Repeats the cry amid its falling leaves ;
Past is the cheerful hum of laden bee,
Vanished the mellow glory of the sheaves.

Now do grim shadows usher in the night,
That follows fast upon the shortened day ;
More boldly doth the night-bird wing her flight,
And croak defiance to the moon's wan ray.

Now doth the peasant, hastening sadly home,
Trembling, recall some half-forgotten tale ;
How in the chill of evening, elf and gnome
Sporting, hold revel high on hill and dale.

Up from the deep moist bosom of the earth,
Autumn arising shakes her dewy hair,
And leaves the sedgy marshes of her birth
To soar aloft ; a creature wondrous fair !

But pale and sad : one slender hand upholds
Above her head a veil's translucent sheen,
That falling, wraps within its silv'ry folds
Her limbs, whose charm thus hidden, yet is seen.

A weird light flickers faintly round her head,
And sparkles on the tinted gossamer
Of delicate wings, that to the breeze outspread
Support her flight, yet scarcely seem to stir.

Yet tears are in her eyes, ah ! mournful tears ;
A shadow dims her pale brow as of pain ;
Telling of faded hopes in vanished years,
Of mirth and joys that may not come again.

So have I heard her from her couch arise,
When night is full of murmurs, and the sound
Of the chill air that rustles as she flies,
And the dead twigs that crackle to the ground.

And thus she floateth, brushing from the bough
The russet leaves that sadly linger there ;
And wreathes them into chaplets for her brow,
Or plucks the drooping flow'rets for her hair.

And while the pattering rain-drops on the grass,
Fall with a ceaseless monotone, the night
Enwraps her, and the stars behold her pass
Through the bleak darkness in her silent flight.

R. O. L.

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AN OLD STORY.

IN Mr Jennings's delightful *Rambles among the Hills*, no description is more real than that of Bolsover Castle. Even on the minds of the most prosaic of mortals, very weird must be the impression left by that lonely old-world spot. Yet how impossible it is to instil into those who have it not, that love for every visible and tangible memento of bygone times, which some feel to be a continual source of pleasure. It may be doubted whether among the crowds who gaze on the gray walls of many a noble ruin, or pace the oak-panelled galleries and chambers of one of our well-preserved ancestral Halls, more than one or two in a hundred enter into the inner spirit of the place, and luxuriate in what may be called the true sentiment of antiquity. One will wonder at the massive walls, admire the beauty of the carving, and perfection of the site. Another, admitting these, possesses a keener enjoyment in the vivid realisation of the *human* interests connected with these old time-worn habitations; he will feel an intense longing to know *something* of those whose homes were here—a passing sadness at his entire ignorance. It is true that the dwellings of those whose names, from whatever cause, are inscribed on the 'roll of fame,' do to some extent satisfy these longings. The actions of their former occupants live in history; we know their faces, and are familiar with some of their inmost thoughts; and yet of these it is truly said: 'Time hath his revolutions, and there must be a period and an end to all temporal things—an end of names and dignities, and of whatsoever is terrene. For where is Bohun? Where is Mowbray? Where is Mortimer? Nay, where is Plantagenet? They are entombed in the tombs and sepulchres of mortality.'

It is the small desolate ruined tower or grange, barely retaining the name, and some shadowy legend, generally of tragical shape, once the homes of those nearest to ourselves in rank and means, which we people with ideal figures; although the *real* ones, their countless different

characters and natures, their quiet every-day life, joys and sorrows, faces and ways, are, and ever must be, absolutely unknown to us. There are few people in dear Old England who cannot, in their own neighbourhood, point to more than one edifice, whose remnants of carved stonework, half-obliterated inscriptions and coats of arms, and pillared gateway, show that it has seen better days, explained by the 'handle to its name,' the little addition of 'Hall' or 'Court.' How impossible to look without interest on the mass of gray buildings, gay with wallflowers and stonecrop, and not hunt out the place in the County History, where, among pages given to families long passed away, we find perhaps the forgotten crest, the name, and words, 'Extinct before 1600.' In some cottage near, when the quaint oak chair or old delf plate is noticed, the owner remarks: 'Ay, grandfather used to say *that* came from the old Hall.' A tinge of melancholy subduces the fancies in your mind while looking on the poor relics from that house whence the last of his race has so long departed. You feel the grandest castle, with all its glamour of chivalry and tragedy, 'lords and knights and ladies gay,' does not possess the nameless charm which invests such places.

There is a false sentiment prizing things that are old solely because of their antiquity, or because they are the passing fashion of the day. For he who thus regards, there can be none of that feeling that makes the heart thrill, when the faded piece of patchwork is uncovered, and among the ancient hues and patterns is one small square of mayhap great-grandmother's wedding-gown. He will not understand in the least the wistful regret with which, when the little old red Prayer Book of the last century is opened, we gaze on the withered brown rose-leaves which drop from its time-stained pages—gathered in such far-off summers, and though scentless and colourless, telling a tale of sunny days so long ago, that none are left on earth to remember them. Quite incomprehensible to him will be the tender, almost reverential touch with which that broad white

satin ribbon is untied, fastening the packet of letters 'From my dear son Joe,' when we remember that that loved one was killed in Cuba, a hundred years ago; that all his family are gone, his very name and existence forgotten, until that long hidden bundle of papers arraigns a warm-hearted sailor vividly before us. What a theme for romantic dreams does that slender wine-glass afford, below whose ornamented rim is engraved, 'The charming Miss Jenny Walker.' The frail glass has long survived the fair reigning toast of some eighty or ninety years ago. Is she the figure in that nameless portrait, in white satin and floating lace, hair looped with pearls, and slight fingers clasping a rose, a curiously spotted spaniel crouching by her side? No one knows; for of her not one single memento remains but that ancient glass, and perhaps the egg-shaped rouge-box of enamelled Battersea china painted with tiny flowers. A peculiar charm, a subtle melancholy, invests, for some, such objects, quite indescribable to the uninitiated.

In the writer's family, some time ago, a set of papers were found which for long years had not seen the light. By means of these musty, yellow pages, written in faded ink, in clear handwriting, we find ourselves transported to an ancient Hall in the south of England, to roam from room to room, and look on each, exactly as they were in 1746, the year after the Young Scottish Chevalier unfurled his standard! Far in the depth of the country, the old house stood, four miles from the nearest small market town. No picture of it remains; so a mental one must be formed of a many-gabled lath-and-plaster, 'post-and-pan' dwelling; or perhaps a long, low brick house, mellowed by time into harmonious greens, reds, and yellows, covered with roses and geraniums, surrounded by stately trees, and incomplete without its bowling-green, fishponds, and gay parterre. Who knows how rich in colour were the old walls inclosing this haunt of bees and birds, and how sweet the perfume wafted from the lilacs and syringas, gillyflowers and fair white lilies?

The owner of this old house, who lived here alone with his servants, we will call Squire Chalcot. He was the last of his name; and for generations, had been, with every circumstance connected with him, totally forgotten, until the contents of the papers enable us to picture very vividly his surroundings. Nothing striking or sensational was discovered; no hidden secrets came to light; still, this sketch of an old house, and its contents so long ago, may, from its truthfulness, possess some little interest.

The mere names of the rooms at Chalcot Hall have an old-fashioned ring. The 'hall' of course, with 'Delph' were standing on the mantel-shelf and in the oak corner cupboard; the 'Ale and Small-beer Buttries,' the 'Parlour,' the 'Buttery Chamber,' the 'Hall Chamber.' The furniture, chiefly oak, would suit the panelled rooms.

There were India-backed chairs with brocaded and flowered cushions, worked curtains, marble and velvet-topped card-tables. And are not several sets of powder and patch boxes mentioned among the bedroom furnishings? The eyes of many ancestors watched their last descendant from the picture-covered walls—fair dames in powdered heads and huge hoops. Men in high-peaked hats and buff jerkins, or, more likely, flowing love-locks, for among the large number of pictures, one only is described, 'A Portrait of Charles I.' Surely some of these gallants have fought for the crown, and the old man may have mourned his inability to send a scion of his house to further the cause of the 'king over the water.'

Squire Chalcot's musical tastes were evident. That flute on summer nights would startle the owls, who had all their own way in the shady garden; an air or two on the violin or hautboy would help to while away the long evenings; a pleasant change from the game of backgammon with some neighbouring crony. There stands the board on the spindle-legged table, beside the 'ostrich egg and painted cocoa-nuts,' and the 'bowls for ninepins' tell of outdoor amusements. The quiet slide of time in that remote spot was pleasantly marked by more than one quaint silver clock; and what excuse could lazy servants give for late rising, when the great 'larum' in its glass case up-stairs sounded in the morning? Let us peep into the chambers above. 'Mrs Molly's,' one is called; and we wonder at the ponderous bedsteads, and imagine the suffocating feeling of sleeping behind those 'cloth curtains lined with silk,' or coarser 'camblet' or fustian, especially as none but feather-beds were used. The 'lace counterpanes' and 'silk damask quilts' sound quite in harmony with the many-carved and 'guilt-framed' looking-glasses. The heart of some Mrs Joan or Mrs Betty, who in close mob, fustian gown, and tidy neckerchief, ruled the domestic arrangements, must have rejoiced in the 'spruce chests' and presses laden with 'linen' and 'calico,' 'dowls' and 'huckaback;' and the vast store of china, glass, and the like, from the 'flow'd wine and syllibub glasses,' to the 'horn, glass, and pewter dishes.'

And what sort of figure moved against this background? Alas, form and features are for ever unknown! Was Squire Chalcot a stout, red-faced, jovial, hunting Squire, as some of his possessions seem to indicate? That punell-bowl, with its memories of many a convivial evening of auld langsyne; the 'hawk's hood and bells,' which hang with the 'silver spurs' in the hall; the 'long guns' and 'fowling-guns;' the 'cross-bow,' and 'twenty-six ox hunting-horns.' We would rather picture him of spare form, with the refined and clearly cut features, keen intelligent expression, and dark eyes, contrasting with the white powdered head, which often please us in old miniatures. Of course he wore a wig, and certainly had a large stock on hand, or carefully preserved his old ones, as we read of 'seven wigs in a box.' His wardrobe contained much gay attire; indeed, he was something of a dandy—the 'Compleat Beau' was one of his books—and no doubt on suitable occasions appeared to no small advantage in his 'blue silk waistcoat

wrought with gold, small scarlet cloak, silver shoe and knee buckles, and glittering shirt-buttons with diamonds. One of the four diamond rings enumerated adorned the hand holding one of many snuff-boxes—tortoiseshell for common use; one with a 'whistle' on it to call his dogs; several of silver and mother-of-pearl; and more than one of gold, with his arms engraved thereon.

But probably Squire Chalcot was more at home when, in his sober brown clothes and skull-cap, he sat in his library, with no gay colouring or handsome distinctive binding to give each book a face of its own; rows of dingy brown calf-skins, or heavy board-bound volumes, lined the shelves, hardly distinguishable but in size from each other; the sole brightness, their occasional red or mottled edges, or brass clasps. Nearly every noted author was represented. Plays abounded, from Ben Jonson and the dramatists of Charles II., to the 'Post Boy Robbd.' A wide range of history was embraced, from Josephus to 'An Essay on the Late Queen,' including the very popular Roman and English Histories of Echard. How fresh and new-looking the 'Spectators' and 'Tatlers,' 'Prior's Poems' and Dryden's 'Virgil.' Seated in his arm-chair, the Squire would take a 'Voyage to America,' a 'Journey to Naples,' or visit Russia with Toland; while maps and geographical works showed his acquaintance with other countries besides his own. Classical authors not omitted; nor works on astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics wanting. The 'Florist,' and numerous volumes on gardening, in English, French, and Dutch, speak of country pursuits, as do the 'Game Laws' and 'Art of Agriculture.' The many books on 'Physick' prove our good Squire had paid that subject no small attention—perhaps from the remoteness of medical aid; and well-thumbed was Culpepper's 'Dispensatory.' That he was a good Churchman, there seems no doubt; Burnet, Atterbury, Tillotson, Sherlock, Barrow, Hopkins, that line of famous divines, had all contributed sermons and books of devotion, of which there was a collection so extensive that it might be imagined the library of some clerical relative had descended to him. For lighter reading, there was 'Gulliver's Travels,' and Sir Roger L'Estrange's 'Fables.' Mention also made of a silver box full of coins, and a 'gilt medal of William and Mary in a shagreen case.'

And is there no tinge of romance about this lonely old place? no sign that bright joyous days were once the lot of its inhabitants? no traces of woman's presence? Yes; though invisible to others, those aged eyes see a fair shadowy form gliding through the quiet rooms; and in his ear echoes a gentle voice, and laughter and sweet singing; for deep in the secret recesses of Squire Chalcot's heart, ever green is the memory of her whom he has lost—his wife. Up-stairs, in the 'gilt leather box,' are put carefully away, as precious treasures, things that belonged to her: 'an amber egg' and a 'heart set with diamonds and small garnets'—lovers' gifts of long years ago. Her diamond rings and earrings, her 'girdle buckle,' set with the like precious stones, and many other 'trifles' in a 'small velvet trunk' are all as tenderly laid aside as Dr Johnson placed his wife's wedding-ring in the little round box

among the cotton-wool. There on the spinet still lies the 'parcel of songs' she used to sing. The tiny 'scissors in the old silver case' lie useless, as they have for years. Those 'embroidered sweet bags' have still a lingering faint perfume. Those dainty 'mother-of-pearl spoons with silver handles' must surely have been a bridal gift, matching the small 'blue and white tea-dishes' and chocolate cups. How we long to gaze on her 'picture' in the shagreen case! Those shagreen cases and little antique boxes! how they speak of the far-off past; how vividly they recall those long departed ones, to whom their ancient-looking exterior brought thrilling memories, who kept their treasures therein, or took the sparkling jewels from the now faded satin cushions, to deck themselves with joyous youthful glee for some gay assembly or county gathering, or some 'roué' or ball in the rarely visited Metropolis. Let us hope this gentle lady never fastened her 'pearl necklace' with an aching heart, although too often.

Pining cares in rich brocades are drest,
And diamonds glitter on an anxious breast.

Folded away in presses and cupboard, all lavender and woodruff scented, are the dresses once worn by Squire Chalcot's wife—her 'black lace hood,' recalling sweet old Mrs. Delany's face; and if health's own cunning hand had painted the rose and lily of her cheeks, how must her husband have admired her in her 'green tippet with silver fringe,' or in her 'blue tabby suit.' But the 'red and white gown lined with red,' her 'scarlet silk night gown' (evening dress), and the prevalence of that hue in her wardrobe, seem to point to dark hair and soft brown eyes. How bewitchingly becoming must have been the 'scarlet long cloak and hood,' when, seated behind her husband on the 'plush pillion cover' now mouldering in the lumber-room, she travelled over hill and dale, on the rare occasions of leaving home, her trunks following on horses laden with 'pack-saddles' and 'panniers,' suggestive of rutty roads deep in mire in those secluded country parts. On Sunday, she picked her way to the neighbouring church, carrying a 'wrought Common Prayer Book,' and 'umbrello,' then destined solely for feminine use; and her 'brocaded mantle' and 'scarlet feather muff' would attract many eyes to the 'Squire's pew.' She would not much trouble the grave books in her husband's library, but content herself with a few favourites—'Country Dances,' the 'Lady's Delight,' the 'Royal Cookery' and Receipt Books, the 'Compleat Housewife,' 'Lady Rich's Closet,' and the 'Common Christian Spelling Book,' 'Thomas à Kempis' and the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' doubtless enriched by the quaintest woodcuts, not being absent from her little store of literary treasures.

And one other shadowy figure haunts the old house—that of a little child. Few are the signs of its presence—the earliest perhaps that volume, 'Instructions to a Son.' But the little son was never to receive tender lessons from a father's lips. A 'coral,' a 'child's gown lined with green,' a 'parcel of silver toys,' tell the tale of the joy and hope that once had been, and then passed away for ever.

Farewell to thee, old Hall, with all thy associations! Faint and shadowy as are the images

which flash upon our inner eye as we think of thee, who can say how near they may be to the truth—the *real* memory of 'what has been, and never more can be!'

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—HIS FEET WERE IN THE PRIMROSE WAY, AND HE HAD NOT THE HEART TO LEAVE IT.

I HAVE omitted to tell of an encounter between Val and Gerard, in which Val received as many and as hearty thanks for the service he had rendered as the most exigent of men could have expected. Gerard took the restoration of the money of his friend almost as if it had been a gift. He associated the recovery of love, fortune, and happiness with Val Strange, and longed for an opportunity to show his good-will to his chance benefactor. On his side, the long-standing friendship between them rose to white-heat, and stayed there, for Gerard's enthusiasms were neither easily excited nor quick to cool. In the expressions of his regard and affection, he did not seem altogether gracious—feeling it hard to speak out where he felt so keenly. He blundered through with interjectory ejaculations of 'Old fellow' and 'Old man,' the rough clumsy amity touching Val to the quick all the while, knowing what he had meditated against his friend's peace.

'I owe you more than the money, old man,' the grateful recipient of new fortune had told him. 'You know.' That was all he could say on that matter; but the blush on his honest face and the ashamed tenderness of his eyes, were eloquent even to his rival. Val of course pool-pooled the notion of gratitude.

'My dear Gerard,' he had answered, 'you owe me nothing.' (He knew well enough what Gerard owed him.) 'You don't want to insult me by supposing that I might have bargained with you for the papers.'

That was so ridiculous, that even in the tremor of his gratitude Gerard had burst into a great shout of laughter at it, and had struck a jovial hand in Val's and gripped him hard.

As he lay in the heather after Gerard's departure, the remembrance of this scene forced itself upon him. 'He has got the money, hang him!' said Val moodily. 'If I hadn't been so ridiculously Quixotic and punctilious about it, I might have saved myself this humiliation; I might have saved Constance from the talk of every old tabby in the county, and everything would have been open and above-board.' He began to think somewhat bitterly and angrily of Gerard, and to feel that his hitherto successful rival stood somewhat unduly in his way. It is the most natural thing in the world to hate a man if you intend to injure him. In such a case, hatred is a sort of spiritual corn. If you allow your boots to pinch your toes, nature protects them—and grows corns. If you propose to pinch your soul, by damaging a man who never harmed you, your moral nature protects itself by a hatred. And in each case the protection is a source of considerable discomfort. 'He has got the money,' said Val again; 'confound him! That ought to be enough for him. It was a piece of amazing luck to get it, and he

may be satisfied with what he has. And what right'—and here Val began to think himself on stronger ground—'what right has he to wreck a woman's life?' He began, on the strength of that reflection, to feel himself virtuous. And he had at least the assurance from Constance's own lips that she loved him. To marry another man in such circumstances would be—he scarcely cared to characterise it with Constance in his mind. And so, by steps almost imperceptible, the unhappy Val went downwards towards hatred and dissimulation, and justified himself as he went.

Mr Lumby was not long at the picnic, being still a little weak in body as in mind. It was one of the pleasant characteristics of Lumby Hall that nearly all the servants were old family belongings. The parlour-maid, for instance, was the daughter of a coachman and a cook who had made a match of it, and retired from servitude at the Hall after growing up there from stable-boy and kitchen-maid. The present coachman had been stable-boy; the butler had been pantry-boy; the footman had been a page in the old house. All the servants were held by ties of old association to the place, and one or two of them had felt the triumph of the rehabilitation of the family as though it had been a matter personal to themselves. One of these attached old-servitors gave Mr Lumby his arm as they walked down the gentle slope of sward which led from the Welbeck Hollow to the lower meadows. There the carriage waited, and with Milly by his side, Mr Lumby drove away. The young people kept the thing going to a late hour. On the tombstone of the poor princess, a great bonfire was lighted as the shades of evening fell; the trees round the beautiful little circle were stuck full of Chinese lanterns; the band played, and the guests danced and made love, and otherwise enjoyed themselves. There were seniors enough present for the preservation of the proprieties, and not enough to damp the hearty hilarity of the time. Gerard, when everything was over, surrendered Constance to Reginald's care, and drove his mother home. To his surprise, the old man was sitting up to receive them, and in answer to remonstrances, declared that he felt well and strong. He had insisted on re-hearing from Milly the whole story of the recovery of the lost papers, and had grasped it more clearly than before, and now he was quite full of the approaching wedding.

'Gerard, my lad, he said with feeble cheerfulness, 'you must have a bachelor party before you are married. I had a bachelor party. You must ask Valentine Strange. We owe everything to Valentine Strange, and I always liked him. I was always very friendly with his father and his uncle in their day. We must have Valentine Strange.'

Gerard and his mother were both so happy in the old man's recovery, that festivity seemed natural to them. And why should not Gerard give a party to his bachelor friends before he finally left their circle and became a Benedict? It befell that Val received an invitation to that festival within eight-and-forty hours of his interview with Constance, and that it came by the post which bore to him the first letter he had ever received from her. The wedding was

already fixed for the first of July, and Gerard's farewell to bachelorhood was naturally fixed for the preceding evening, the thirtieth of June. And here was the month already.

On the morning that these two missives arrived, Val had received an unusually large batch of letters. His hope of hearing from Constance had risen by this time to exasperation, and he ran feverishly through the bundle in search of a lady's handwriting. In his haste, he passed two epistles as one, and Gerard's invitation was among the first letters he opened. He glared over it, and felt stricken. Old Lumby had written a postscript to it with his own shaky hand. 'Your father and your uncle,' he said, 'were dear friends of mine. You must come to my son's party.' He had signed this brief and shaky message, 'Your grateful servant.' The Stranges were not without their debt to the Lumby, Val remembered; and whatever happened did but seem to make the enterprise he was bent on look darker. He was none the less bent upon it; but he rebelled, naturally enough, against the gathering host of circumstances which made him feel criminal. His was a mission of knight-errantry. He was going to save Constance from a life-long slavery and misery; and for a knight-errant to have his conscience throwing mud at him as though he were a thief, was decidedly unpleasant. The almost piteous gratitude of the broken old man hurt him, and appealed pathetically against his purpose.

'I shall have to tread on the old man, to get at her,' he thought, and he began to dislike the old man for lying there to be trodden on. Why would people get in a knight-errant's way? A knight-errant prancing along among primroses to rescue his appointed imprisoned damsel, had a right to better treatment, surely. She didn't love the fellow. She loved him, Val Strange. And yet, here were people blocking his road to her, and insisting on being injured by pure justice.

But at last Val discovered Constance's letter. He did not know her handwriting, but he knew the crest on the envelope, and he tore the missive open with trembling fingers, and read this:

DEAR MR STRANGE—We have both been foolish. I appeal to your honour. Allow me to forget.—Yours truly, CONSTANCE JOLLY.

Now, this of course was absolutely maddening, and in the circumstances, the recipient felt himself justified in the employment of a good deal of strong language. Val was a gentleman, and by all rules of courtesy, a gentleman is forbidden to swear over a lady's letter. But Val gave way, and raged, and then sat down crushed for a minute, but recovering himself, began to cast about in thought for a means of untying this knot. He felt the delicacy of Constance's position; he began, even in a minute or two, to see how well this coyness became her, and to feel that he would be very much worse than unheroic if, because of such a check as this, he drew back from his enterprise. So he caught up a pen, drew a sheet of paper to him, and began to write. Words came easily, and he filled three or four pages with protestations.

'No,' he said suddenly; 'expenditure of words in a case like this is waste of power.' So he

wrote simply: 'We love each other, and I will not surrender you.' He initialed that Caesar-like despatch, and having inclosed it in an envelope, was about to address it, when it suddenly occurred to him that his handwriting would be known, and that some inquiry might be created by it. He tried to feign a lady's hand; but even to his own eye the fraud was too transparent to deceive anybody. He set his wits to work to find a way through this difficulty, and after a minute or two of thought, he saw it. He looked at his watch, consulted a time-table, rang the bell, and ordered the dog-cart for the railway station. Driving thither, he took train for Bristol, desperate with impatience on the journey. Arrived, he took a hansom, and drove to an hotel he knew, a quiet and retired house with an old-fashioned clientèle. His uncle had been wont to stop there, and Val was known. He ordered luncheon, and made a feint of eating, and descended for a chat with the landlady. 'By the way,' he said casually, 'did my maiden aunt ever stay here?' The talk had been going on for some time, and this query was dropped with considerable artfulness.

'I didn't know you had a maiden aunt, Mr Strange,' said the landlady.

'Didn't know I had a maiden aunt?' said Val. 'Nonsense!'

'Upon my word, I didn't,' returned the landlady, laughing. 'Why didn't she get married?'

'That's not my business, Mrs Oakley,' said Val lightly. 'But'—drawing the envelope from his pocket—'I have a little joke for her here. I don't want her to know from whom it comes. Will you address it for me?'

'Valentine's Day has gone by, Mr Valentine,' said the landlady. 'I hope you're not going to plague her.'

'Not at all,' said Val. 'I think I'm going to please her. Do address it. She won't know your handwriting, and of course she would know mine.'

The landlady took the envelope, and sitting down, dipped her pen in the ink. 'Tell me the address,' she said. Val gave Constance's address, and the landlady wrote it slowly.

'Thank you,' said Val. 'And now, give me a postage-stamp, if you please.' He stamped the letter, and dropped it into the post-box in the hotel lobby. 'That will pass unsuspected,' he said to himself; and after a little further talk, designed to cover his retreat, he drove back to the station, and turned up at Brierham in time for dinner. A day or two went by, how heavily and monotonously you may guess; and Constance, struggling with herself, refused to be drawn into a correspondence fraught with so much danger. Outside the magnetic influences of Val's presence, she could control herself, and could call pride and honour to her aid. During this time, Gerard experienced curious treatment at her hands. She was languid and cold at one moment, and warm and eager the next; and he, being without the key to the puzzle, was perplexed by the extraordinary variations of her manner. Constance tried hard to compel herself to some tenderness towards Gerard which should seem to herself to commit her to him irrevocably, and this struggle naturally bred a reaction of languid coldness.

This also in its turn re-acted, and in her self-reproach she was once or twice amazingly sweet and tender to him, and looked at him with such eyes, that he could read nothing but love in them. His own willingness to read that sweet message helped the deceit; and his constant patience under her coldness, his simple manly loyalty, and the downright sincerity of his worship, were not without their effect upon her.

No answer coming to his Caesar-like despatch, Val began to grow nervous about it, and to fear that he had overdone authority. And all this time the fatal day was drawing nearer, and Reginald's knowledge forbade Val the house, or he would have gone thither and made an opportunity for seeing her. This being out of the question, he wrote a long letter of appeal and protest, and putting the old ruse in action through a new medium this time, again had it forwarded under a female hand. Constance shed many bitter tears above the lines he had penned; but she kept a resolute silence. Some anger began to rise in her heart at his persistency, even whilst she valued it as a proof of the love she prized so dearly, and felt to be so disloyal. But everything was binding her closer and closer to her own spoken bond with Gerard. His parents' affection, the general understanding that the marriage was settled, the very imminence of the ceremony itself, the suffering Gerard and his people had already undergone, the congratulations of her friends on her lover's recovery of his old station, and the renewal of the match—she felt powerless to struggle against all these accumulated influences. And so, Val began to anger her because he had power to pain her. He, meanwhile, unconscious of the influences which moulded her conduct, or weighing them imperfectly, sat in the shadow of his own egotism, by this time grown monstrous, and in its gloom saw nothing but itself. Constance's marriage with Gerard could be nothing, to his mind, but a hideous and shameful sacrifice, and at all hazards he was ready to stop it. But how? The days went on, and he was powerless, and to add to his miseries, Gerard came over a week before the date appointed for the wedding, and seeing how Val had lost his old cheerfulness and jollity, insisted upon his going over to Lumby Hall, and staying there with the guests who had already begun to arrive in view of the impending ceremony.

'So be it,' said Val at length, overborne by Gerard's reiterated friendly pressure. He was kindly and gentle by nature, but he was half-murderous in his feelings towards this blundering genial happy rival, who thus insisted on flouting his happiness in his face. Gerard had driven over; and nothing would satisfy him but that Val should at once drive back with him, and take up his abode at Lumby Hall until the wedding. The other accepted this programme in desperation, and gave orders that the necessary things should be packed at once. Perhaps even this move, mad as it appeared, might lead to something. The two young fellows drove from Brierham to Lumby Hall together; the one all joy and friendship, the other all despair and hatred, which he dared not show. To Val's surprise, Hiram Search received him. He had the keenest memory for faces, and knew him at

once. The circumstances in which he and the Yankee adventurer had met and parted were not altogether soothing to his self-respect, and though under ordinary conditions he would have forgotten and forgiven, he was so tender now, that even so slight a matter as this made him sore.

'You have met Mr Strange once before—eh, Search?' said Gerard, who was in high good spirits.

'I remember the fellow,' said Val haughtily, neither knowing nor caring that he renewed the disagreeable impression he had at first sight created. Why should he care, whatever Hiram or anybody like him might think or feel? It was his ordinary habit to be courteous to all men, and his misfortune that he met Hiram in this unusual and abnormal mood.

'Look after Mr Strange,' said Gerard; 'there's a good fellow.' Hiram did not care to valet Mr Strange, and this was the first disagreeable he had encountered since coming to Lumby Hall. But he obeyed nevertheless; and having seen Val's belongings taken up-stairs, began to unpack his portmanteau, when out fell a large envelope with exceedingly frayed edges. Across this envelope were written in characters of unusual clearness, these words: 'Thy grace being gained, cures all disgrace in me.' Hiram saw them, and thought nothing of them; but catching up the envelope, a portrait slipped out of it. He had seen Constance more than once, and the portrait was too true to be mistaken. What brought Mr Strange with a portrait of Gerard Lumby's sweetheart? And what was the meaning of the inscription on the envelope: 'Thy grace being gained, cures all disgrace in me?' Hiram was unfavourably impressed with Mr Strange, and was ready to believe evil of him. This little event of the photograph affected him, therefore, somewhat induly.

And now, as the least imaginative of men may fancy, Val's position began to be unbearable. Any further approach to Constance was impossible; and though she had confessed that she loved him, the confession seemed only to have set her apart from him the more determinedly. At Lumby Hall he had almost as much freedom as he would have found at home, and in the afternoon he used to absent himself from the jovial party in the smoking-room, and prowled round Daffin Head, and stare at the lights in the house, feeling like the Peri who at the gate of Paradise stood disconsolate. One afternoon, when the marriage had grown so perilously near that his head swam and his heart failed to think of it, he wandered on the customary way, hoping, in spite of despair, that some avenue yet might open, when a trim little figure came tripping along the country road, and he recognised a late fellow-passenger, the girl he had befriended at Southampton. She knew him, and made him an odd little obeisance, half nod, half courtesy; and he seeing that she came away from the Grange, seized eagerly at the poor straw of hope her presence afforded.

'Good afternoon,' he said awkwardly. 'I think I remember you.' She repeated the compromised obeisance, and smiled and blushed with plea-

sure. 'You don't live in this part of the country, surely?'

'I am Miss Jolly's maid at the Grange, now,' said little Mary innocently. Val's heart gave a great leap, and his eyes flashed; but he controlled himself.

'Oh,' said Val; 'and how did you come to be there?'

Mary blushing informed him that Mr Search had recommended her to Mr Lumby.

'Will you do me a little favour?' asked Val with as little agitation outwardly as though the favour had been the smallest in the world.

'If I can, sir,' said little Mary. She was ready to fly to serve him.

'I want you to meet me at the gate of the Grange in an hour and a half. That will be ten o'clock. Will you give a note to Miss Jolly, for me, if I bring it then?'

'O yes, sir, with pleasure,' said Mary.

'I don't want anybody else to see it,' said Val. 'Nobody else must know of it. Now can I trust you to be discreet?' Mary promised the utmost discretion; and Val sped back to the Hall, and wrote his last appeal, begging Constance to meet him, if but for a moment, to appoint her own time and place, and give him but a word.

Round the foot of Welbeck Head, across the little bay beyond, and up to the Grange, was a very pretty bit of rustic walk, and Mr Search, who was not without an eye for nature, strolled there in the cool, with his hat a good deal on one side, and a cigar between his teeth. Val passed him swiftly, and was a little savage to see him there, without being conscious of any very precise reason for anger. Hiram, unreasonably angry and unreasonably suspicious, continued walking, to see what took him in the direction of the Grange. The Yankee was, as times go, an honourable man, and he did not care to dog anybody; but he excused himself—he was walking that way already before Val passed him. 'There's no call on me to turn,' he said, 'unless I've got a mind to.' Before the gate of the Grange, the dark figure ahead of him seemed to pause for a second, but for a second only. 'If he comes back this way,' said the guilty Hiram, 'he'll think I've been spying on him;' and deviating from the road, he strolled in the faint misty moonlight across the fields, accusing himself somewhat in his thoughts for having suspected his employer's friend.

But Val in that momentary pause at the gate had thrust the note into Mary's hands, with just two or three hasty whispered words: 'Let no one see it. I will wait for an answer.' The maid carried the note to her mistress, who was in her own room. Constance read it, and could not resist the temptation its summons brought her. She muffled herself hastily in a gray shawl, stole tremulously down-stairs, and found the dining-room deserted, with its windows open on the lawn. She stepped out into the night, passed round the house silently like a ghost, and sped with a heart that sounded an impetuous alarm, along the darkened drive. Val, who had marked that he was followed, had seen Hiram off the field, and was by this time back at the gate again, standing in the shadow of the trees within the drive.

'Constance!' he whispered. She stopped short, and he approached her and folded her in his arms. 'My love, my love!' he murmured. 'My heart was breaking to see you. Why were you so cruel? Why did you leave me unanswered?' And when she would have answered him, he stopped her lips with kisses. 'You love me,' he murmured again. 'Why should you break two hearts, and blight two lives? I know you love me. I will not let you go.' This masterful and peremptory wooing is not the way with all women; but if the right man adopts it, it rarely fails. And Constance in his arms found the urgent voices of duty and honour suddenly gone dumb, and her tired heart at rest. 'Here,' she thought, 'is my place after all.'

'It is too late to go back,' said Val. 'You love me, and you can never be happy without me. And I will not live or try to live without you.' She began to cry and to cling to him, and to protest—she had been so unhappy—so unhappy. How was a poor girl to know where duty lay? It was terrible to think of marrying Gerard. She told Val as much, and he kissed her anew with passionate triumph. Should she write to him, and say so, even now in these last days of hope? she asked. But her father wished the match, and her brother and her aunt were favourable to it. She would have to endure so much shame in breaking it off at this late hour. What could be done?

Even yet it was not too late to pay some little tribute to honour. Even yet, Val might have played the man, and have told Gerard the plain truth, and faced his indignation and his misery. But his feet were in the 'Primrose Way,' and he had not the heart to leave it.

(To be continued.)

SEA-FARE.

In these days of monster steamships, quick passages, and luxurious ocean-travel, we are rather apt to forget how short a time has elapsed since weary voyages in sailing-ships were the only means of communication with distant lands, and with what avidity nearly every recent discovery in art, science, or manufacture has been seized upon and made instrumental in some way or other towards effecting this contrast—possibly a greater one than any other phase of progress can show, and rivalling even the change from stage-coaches to railways.

And not less than the contrast in speed is the revolution which has taken place in the mode of life on board. But a comparatively few years ago, every one who ventured on a voyage to a foreign shore, whether he were a peer of the realm or a denizen of the fore-castle, knew that for weeks or months, as the case might be, he must put up with an unvaried diet of salt beef and salt pork, accompanied by hard biscuit or dried peas, with a pitiful dole of water daily, and the ever-haunting possibility of supplies running short. Now, the gentleman who pays for a trip of three thousand miles, grumbles if his wine be not iced, and demands daily three

good and abundant meals of fresh meat and vegetables.

In the course of this paper, it is proposed to offer to the reader some authentic statistics concerning the commissariat department alone of a large ocean-going steamship. And in considering these matters, two points strike the attention rather forcibly—the perfection and immense experience shown in the system by which such a ship can be victualled so liberally yet so exactly as to prevent loss by superfluity, or embarrassment through insufficiency; and the marvellous cheapness which competition between great lines has brought about. The discontented passenger who complains that some small item in his dinner of many courses is not to his taste, seldom reflects on the vast forethought which must have been exercised on his behalf down to the smallest minutiae—for there are no shops at sea wherein to purchase any little thing that may have been forgotten—or on the fact that his passage-money is probably less than the amount which he would have to pay for living at a good hotel with an inferior table for the time equal to the duration of his journey.

The following details have been culled not so much from the very largest steamers, as from those of the best class which take long voyages and are mainly provisioned at the outset. Thus they do not apply to the huge North Atlantic boats, with their six and eight day passages, or to teeming emigrant vessels; but have been averaged principally from the fleets of the Peninsular and Oriental (running to the East), Royal Mail (West Indiss and Brazil), Orient (Australia), Pacific Steam Navigation (both coasts of South America), Messageries Maritimes (East, West, and South), and Union (Cape of Good Hope) Companies. It must be remembered, however, that they all vary, for many reasons. Some carry more of one thing and less of another. Some Companies make their own ice on board, and provide themselves with dead-meat instead of live-stock—a very important item. Some take a sufficiency of this, that, or the other thing at starting; while others will renew those stores at their different ports of call, according to the local cost of the articles and the facilities on board for storing them; while the same ship may be differently stocked for different voyages, influenced by the time of year and the probabilities of a greater or smaller number of passengers. In no case is the quantity stated exaggerated beyond the actual figures which some vessels' provedore accounts present—possibly, indeed, falling short of others. It will be readily understood that the major part of the substances mentioned are for the use of the first-class passengers; since those which have been selected at hazard as illustrative of the subject, are rather such as indicate the luxurious profusion and completeness of arrangements, than what may be termed the necessities of equipment.

For instance, a landsman might feel some interest in learning that such a ship as the representative ideal whose commissariat we are about to glance at, would, if set upright on her stern, project her bowsprit above the cross on the top of St Paul's Cathedral; that her boatswain's stores would include one ton of paint, five tons of spare rope, and five hundred yards of canvas; and that two thousand gallons of oil are required to lubricate her engines for three months; but the fact of her carrying a hundredweight of pepper for consumption each voyage, will give him a better idea of what we wish to convey.

A passenger steamer of four or five thousand tons may have on board seven hundred souls, or more. Two hundred, say, of these will be saloon passengers, a very few second-class, and probably three hundred third-class or steerage passengers. Her company will number something above one hundred and fifty, of whom more than half will be servants, apart from the crew-proper; eight or ten cooks of various degrees—the *chef* generally a Frenchman, and usually one at least of each nationality likely to be included among the passengers—two bakers, a confectioner, three butchers, and about sixty stewards and waiters, English and foreign. Her voyage 'there and back' will occupy from eight to fifteen weeks; and her stores, renewable each trip, are worth many thousands of pounds.

We shall want a parting glass with the friends who have come to see us off at starting—and possibly a little brandy not long after—so we had better begin to make one or two rough notes at the bar. Here and in the wine-rooms below, we shall find twenty-five thousand bottles of beer, four thousand bottles of spirits, fifteen hundred bottles of champagne, five thousand of other wines—besides a large quantity, in the wood, of some light claret or Figuera, which is frequently supplied gratis at breakfast and dinner—and ten thousand bottles of various aerated waters. One thousand lemons are suggestive; but though eighty tons of ice—where there is no ice-making machine—may seem conducive to unlimited sherry-cobblers and other 'long drinks,' it must be borne in mind that the chief functions of the ice-house are to cool the drinking-water in the tropics and preserve fresh meat, fish, and fruit. Passing to more innocent beverages, milk *ad libitum* appears to be guaranteed by one thousand tins of the condensed article, and five hundred gallons of the fluid 'direct from the cow,' kept sweet in the refrigerator. 'A milch cow on board' makes a good line in a Company's advertisement, and is calculated to attract those who contemplate travelling with a family of children. But where there are half a thousand people, the presence of such an animal must be soothing rather to the imagination of the milk-drinker, than calculated to affect the quality of the consumed milk to any appreciable extent. Nevertheless, a cow is attached to most passenger steamboats. One thousand pounds of tea and eighteen hundred pounds of coffee, sweetened with eight thousand pounds of sugar, are comfortable items for those who relish the cheering cup; while twenty thousand gallons of fresh water, brought from the shore, and stored in huge tanks in the

hold, with a daily supply of one thousand gallons in addition from the condensers, is a matter of importance both to the inner and outer man.

Now for a few of the catables, at random. Three thousand five hundred pounds of butter; three thousand hams; sixteen hundred pounds of saloon biscuits—Huntley and Palmer's, &c.—not those supplied to the crew; one thousand pounds of 'dessert stores'—muscatels, almonds, figs, &c., exclusive of fresh fruits, which are taken in at every port; fifteen hundred pounds of jams and jellies; six thousand pounds of tinned meats; one thousand pounds of dried beans, and three thousand six hundred pounds of rice; five thousand pounds of onions; forty tons of potatoes; sixty thousand pounds of flour; and twenty thousand eggs. Fresh vegetables, dead-meat, and live bullocks, sheep, pigs, geese, turkeys, guinea-birds, ducks, fowls, fish, and casual game, are generally supplied at each port of call, or replenished at the further end of the journey, so that it is difficult to obtain complete estimates of them. Perhaps two dozen bullocks and sixty sheep would be a fair average for the whole voyage, and the rest may be inferred in proportion. The writer has known five-and-twenty fowls sacrificed in a single day to make chicken-broth. We therefore shan't starve, even if we are a day or two behind time, which is considered a great enormity now.

The mention of chicken-broth suggests sea-sickness, and sea-sickness conjures up the doctor, and with the doctor is associated medicine. His dispensary is as well furnished with drugs as any chemist's shop in a country town; and when we observe that, among other things, it contains twelve ounces of quinine, four gallons of black-draught, twenty pounds of Seidlitz powders, a gallon of castor-oil, and half a hundredweight of Epsom salts, it is evident that if the sick people do not get well, it is from no lack of physic.

Four thousand sheets, two thousand blankets, eight thousand towels, two thousand pounds of various soaps, two thousand pounds of candles—except in those vessels which are fitted with the electric light—sixteen hundred knives, two thousand two hundred plates, nine hundred cups and saucers, three thousand glasses—fancy what a handsome income the amount represented by annual loss from breakage would be!—eight hundred table-cloths, two thousand glass-cloths—all these are figures exhibited in the provoking of one ship alone. Think what they would mount up to when multiplied by the number of ships in each Company's fleet, and then try to realise the fact that this department constitutes only one, and by no means the greatest, of their incidental expenses.

A large quantity of rum was carried until recently in every vessel, rations of that spirit being served out to the ship's company daily, as agreed upon in the articles. This custom has lately been abolished in most of the mercantile marine services, with great advantage both to the owners and their employes. But though mercantile marine Jack's grog is stopped, he can still enjoy his 'baccy, and half a ton of the pleasant weed is recognised as part of the outfit before sailing from dock.

It will be seen that not one tithe part of the

commissariat stores requisite for a big liner have been enumerated—merely a few extracts of the things in daily use, as specimens. Their very bulk brings further necessities; for example, the amount of hay, corn, and other food for the live-stock would form no trifling consideration; and when we remember that every bottle and glass, in use, must have a separate niche or compartment to insure its safety in bad weather; that every cup in service hangs on a special hook; and that, in addition to stores passengers and crew, such a steamer would carry three thousand tons of cargo, and perhaps two thousand, or two thousand five hundred tons of coal—remembering, too, that in the middle she is filled by her engines, which cut an enormous slice out of her hull, and that saloons, ladies' cabin, smoking-room, bathrooms, 'two pianos and an organ,' 'library of six hundred volumes,' &c., all imply a lot of waste ground—the question which comes uppermost in one's mind is, Where do they put it all? And indeed it is marvellous to see how the stowage is contrived; not a cubic inch of room is wasted, but has its own proper occupant. The worthy old adage of 'A place for everything, and everything in its place,' might here be expanded into, 'A place for something everywhere, and something in every place.' The art of condensation of materials and economy of space has probably been studied nowhere to such an extent as on board ship, perforce of necessity, and is carried out even more rigidly in this era of 'floating towns' than in the days of smaller craft. So much attention has now to be paid to decoration, elegance of fittings, and spaciousness of apartments and promenades, that available stowage-room is comparatively more limited than ever. Consequently, the builders' ingenuity is racked to the utmost, and we find every mirror, sofa, and panel masking a locker or some other appliance of stern utility.

Looking at the enormous daily consumption of food which these statistics reveal, it is natural to suppose that the quicker the ship can be hurried to her destination, the more profitable it will be for the owners. Such, however, is not the case. A large steamer's speed averages, let us say, thirteen knots per hour on a daily quantum of from fifty to eighty tons of coal. But increase and decrease of speed—other things being equal—is out of all ratio with the coals burnt; thirty tons per diem would produce ten knots an hour, while fifteen knots might require a hundred tons or more. And after all, coal is the grand item of cost in the working of a steamer. Most Companies reckon that, taking into account the expense of wharfage at home and abroad, transport, labour and dock dues, but *not* including the loss of the space which they occupy in the vessel, the 'black diamonds' average two pounds per ton in price.

Then what an epitome of wealth must a well-found, well-freighted ship be, as she ploughs her way through the waters, exclusive of her priceless cargo of human lives, or even the possible treasures in specie and diamonds of her bullion-room—not to mention the mails which most of them carry, and which are supposed to rank above all else. When we consider that the vessel herself may have cost one hundred and twenty thousand pounds; her engines fifty thousand pounds

more; and that there are some thousands of tons of precious merchandise, baggage, and coal aboard, her provedore stores, about which we have been wondering, seem but a small matter after all!

THE HELODERM.

A VENOMOUS LIZARD.

SOME time ago a box containing a lizard was sent to the London Zoological Gardens, and on the lid was written: '*The bite of this animal is not poisonous.*' One can well imagine that this information was looked upon as doubly superfluous when the inmate was disclosed, seeing that lizards have always been held as harmless creatures. It was handled freely by those present, and examined with a good deal of attention; for the species was new, and no description of it was to be found in the standard works of reference; and when at last conveyed to the Reptilium, it was taken by the keeper and thrust into a den with little ceremony or precaution. Big lizards of all kinds, however, can inflict nasty bites, and are usually ready to do so when first received; a propensity well recognised by practical naturalists, who soon acquire a knack of handling animals without risk. Furthermore, the creature was lethargic from cold and the effects of its long sea-voyage; possibly, also, from want of food, for it had eaten nothing since it left its native land, Mexico. Luckily, therefore, the lizard did not afford a demonstration of those terrible powers with which it is endowed, before its true nature was recognised. But when Dr Günther, the chief of the Zoological Department at the British Museum, and the best authority on reptiles at the present day, to whom the lizard was submitted for classification, had examined its mouth, he at once pronounced it to be dangerous; and all doubts vanished from the minds of the most incredulous when a frog and a guinea-pig were bitten in quick succession; the former being killed almost instantaneously, while the latter was dead in three minutes.

Heloderma horridum is the technical name which has been bestowed on this lethal saurian. For simplicity's sake we will call it the heloderm. It is a handsome creature, and its general hue and appearance strike the attention at once: rather over a foot in length, with a body as thick as a man's wrist; the ground colour a warm pale yellow, covered with a network pattern of dark brownish lines; the tail large, stumpy, and encircled with double rings; muzzle, black. At first it refused grapes, banana, lettuce, carrot, minced meat, cockroaches, frogs, lizards, slow-worms, mice and rats, all of which were tendered to it for food; it, however, devoured a couple of eggs. Harmless as all other lizards are supposed to be, the mouth of the heloderm reveals a dental arrangement totally at variance with all one's preconceived ideas, *every tooth* appearing to be grooved as in the case of the fangs of poisonous serpents. Furthermore, this irreconcilable lizard holds on to its victim, and works its jaws fiercely and continuously after they are buried in the flesh, as though sending an abundant flow of venomous saliva into the body, thus departing from all rule of procedure as any venomiferous serpents on like occasions.

It remains to be seen, however, whether

these grooved teeth are, so to speak, the direct channels for the introduction of a deadly secretion limited to their appendages, as is the case with a snake, or whether they simply effect inoculation of a poisonous matter, disseminated throughout the general saliva or mucus of the mouth by the mere wound they inflict, in the same way that a mad dog communicates hydrophobia by its bite—a process which resembles that of a lancet procuring the absorption of vaccine fluid by its scratch, while the ordinary bite of a venomous snake is rather to be compared to the action of a hypodermic syringe. It is worthy of note, as bearing out both this possibility and the inconsistent character of the heloderm, that it has glands in the lower as well as in the upper jaw.

It will be very interesting to learn the natural food of this creature, and such knowledge will probably give us a solution of the mystery—Why is it, and not the other members of the lizard tribe, venomous? Nature bestows nothing wantonly, and there must be a reason for the heloderm's possession of such a secretion—some function of vital import to the possessor. Poisonous snakes are so provided, not—as many people imagine—to enable them to go about doing mischief, but for the simple purpose of obtaining food. Destitute of the constrictive power which distinguishes boas and pythons, they would be no match for the animals which constitute their natural prey, were it not for their venom. But what can a creature, having teeth to bite with, claws to seize and tear with, agility for pursuit, and, it may be, a prehensile tongue, want this extra and seemingly superfluous ammunition for? In other words, upon what has it been intended to feed, to demand such weapons of offence? Certainly, one would say, not upon eggs, fruit, or cabbages, like the iguana; and we find it apparently as perfectly adapted for catching and slaying small mammals and birds as are many undoubtedly harmless lizards of a similar size and formation.

It may be that it will be found to prey upon some powerful animal that requires great holding-power to retain, and which may probably be cold-blooded animals such as snakes. When a venomous serpent which feeds on birds or rats attacks, it strikes a sudden blow, and withdraws. The victim may stagger or flutter away, but is bound to fall within a short distance, where it can be followed and eaten at leisure. But those which devour their own kind, like the coral-snake and hamadryad, seize the serpents which form their meals, and do not again relinquish them—much as our common grass-snake deals with a frog. The reason for this is evident: the poison takes effect so much more slowly in a cold-blooded animal, owing to its defective organisation, and consequent tardiness of the vital processes, that the bitten snake might escape too far to be retrieved if released before it died.

The Indians in Central Mexico are said to pay a superstitious reverence to the heloderm, and to worship it as the incarnation of one of their deities. The writer heard there—the legend obtains much farther south—of a lizard which fights with all venomous snakes from 'antipathy' and other disinterested motives whenever it comes across

them; but, as a specimen which was brought to me proved to be a common teguexin, and as, furthermore, I was told that the lizard, when accidentally bitten, always runs to a certain shrub, &c., I confess I did not pay much heed to the account. It behoves one, however, to be guarded in ridicule of popular errors for the future, after this distinct triumph of 'vulgar prejudice' over scientific assurance.

BOOK GOSSIP.

HERE is another beautiful volume from the pen of Mr Francis George Heath, entitled *Autumnal Leaves* (London: Sampson Low & Co.). We have before had occasion to notice with approbation the writings of Mr Heath, as he is one of the few whose variety of picturesque description enables them to maintain the interest of the reader through consecutive chapters of scenic word-painting. In this volume Mr Heath gives careful attention not merely to the exquisite tinting, but to the forms and venation, of the more prominent of the leaves whose fading splendour lights up our hedges and woodlands in autumn. The coloured plates of the leaves, given in this volume, are finished with artistic delicacy and grace, and with carefulness and accuracy of draughtsmanship. The frontispiece of bramble-leaves cannot fail to awaken a sense of beauty in any one who has ever, in his roadside walks, marked the beautiful forms and the rich hues of the fading bramble, passing through all the gradations of orange, and red, and russet brown. It is, says our author, the varieties of hue and colour on any single leaf that give the striking character to autumnal foliage, so apparent when it is closely examined. The effect is doubtless due to the manifestations of the preliminary stages of decay; and yet, in his opinion, it is not strictly decay which produces the picturesque changes of colour in the early stages of what is called leaf discoloration; at anyrate it is not decay of a kind which, when once commenced, must inevitably lead to a disintegration of parts. Not only can the course and progress of this discoloration be arrested—in the case of most leaves—at any stage, but means may be taken to alter the conditions which are necessary in order to continue, or merge, mere discoloration into actual decay.

The book is divided into two portions. The first is entitled 'Autumn Rambles;' and the author, in the course of his wanderings round the New Forest and about Brockenhurst, has an opportunity of displaying his singular felicity in describing the more beautiful and picturesque scenery and objects of nature. We have already referred to the coloured drawings which he gives us of bramble-leaves; here is a word-picture of the same as he saw them in a lane at Brocklehurst: 'For the moment the brambles carry the palm of beauty. The purple of their stems contrasts with their still green leaves, and blends with those leaves which have put on their autumnal tints. On the same bush there are the greenish white of late buds, the pink blush of tardy blossoms, and the green, red, and black colours of autumnal fruit. In the bramble stems, too, there is variety; for whilst their

prevailing colour is purple, they are, in places, overspread by vermilion hues; and, where this hue is spread upon the stem, the adjacent foliage is dyed with the same rich colour. Strongly contrasting with the vermilion leaves, are others of bright yellow, approaching gold, and others of greenish white. Now they are sombre in the hue of green, now flushed with crimson, now green and purple-blotched, but always beautiful.' The second portion of the book deals with the subject proper, 'Autumnal Leaves;' the several chapters in which the leaves of the oak, the ash, the maple, the elm, the chestnut, and many others, are described, being accompanied by beautifully tinted plates of the leaves themselves. The book will form a delightful autumn companion to such as find pleasure in country rambles; and the study of it is qualified to lead to a more correct appreciation and distinction of autumn tints, as found on the leaves of particular trees, than the writings of descriptive poets and others at all times evince. Mr Heath's work can scarcely fail to meet with acceptance.

It is quite a common remark nowadays, that the age of letter-writing is past. Things certainly move forward in these times with unprecedented speed; and, what with telegraph wires and newspapers, tidings of all kinds pass so rapidly from place to place, that less is left than ever before for the pen of the private writer. It is true that a first visit to London, or the Highlands of Scotland, or the mountains of Switzerland, may provoke from young folks an outburst of epistolary confidences and gossip; but this state of feeling is evanescent, and except perhaps in the case of lovers, the written missives that pass from hand to hand gradually become as brief, methodical, and uninteresting as the specimens that are served up in those wonderful 'Ready Letter-writers' that teach us how to address ourselves in writing to 'persons of every degree of rank.' Even the correspondence that passes between literary men is, as a rule, of the most business-like type; and it is only perhaps among the warm-hearted and gushing aspirants that anything like an interchange of high-flowing sentiment or elaborate expression of opinion is to be found. This state of things is possibly to be regretted; but nevertheless it exists.

There was, however, a time in which letters were the objects of more care to the writers, and much more precious to the recipients, than now; hence one of the most attractive features of literary biography in the past has been derived from the letters which the biographer was in general able to give. No doubt much of the correspondence thus given to the world has been found to be tedious and for the most part barren. Even the collected letters of such men as Swift and Pope and Arbuthnot are stiff work, if you sit down and try to read them through. On the other hand, there can hardly be more delightful reading than the letters of Cowper and Scott and Byron, especially if taken in connection with the period of life or special circumstances of the writer that called them forth. English literature is rich in letters; and we are glad therefore to draw attention to a book just issued, entitled *The British Letter Writers* (Edinburgh: W. P. Nimmo & Co.), compiled by the editor of

English Essayists. The volume, which has all the advantages of good printing and binding, comprises within it letters of the best English writers from the fifteenth century to the present time. The letters are selected with skill and judgment, and besides being chronologically arranged, are introduced by brief and sufficiently concise notices of their respective writers, or of any special circumstance to which the letters may refer. Most readers have spare half-hours, when it is a relief to escape for a little from methodical study; and in such interludes, there are few books that would more delightfully repay perusal than this collection of English letters.

THE MONTH. SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE chief scientific event of August was the fifty-second meeting of the British Association. Many people naturally look upon this annual exposition of scientific progress as an opportunity of posting themselves in recent discoveries and new speculations of foremost minds; and we venture to imagine that on the present occasion they will not suffer disappointment. A perusal of the President's Address cannot fail to interest even those unaccustomed to pay attention to scientific matters; for Dr Siemens's remarks are so clear, and bring home to our minds such important considerations concerning our well-being and every-day lives, that they at once claim, as they deserve, careful attention.

Dr Siemens, as is well known, is a great authority on electricity, and we owe to his ingenuity the invention of many important instruments. Hence his words regarding the present position of electrical science, and more particularly the application of this form of energy to lighting and motive-power, will be scanned with greater interest than other portions of his Address. But he had also much to say regarding the future of gas as an illuminant and as a heat-giver, which will not only be of great interest to many, but must carry dismay to the hearts of not a few. He believes electricity will be the light of the future, but maintains that gas will still be largely used as the poor man's friend. But the great future in store for gas will be in connection with it as a heat-giver. Dr Siemens points out that a gas giving vast heating power can be produced at a very cheap rate indeed. He proposes that this gas should be made in the coal-pit or at the pit-bank, and should be distributed throughout the country in place of coal. By this means the heavy railway freight would be saved, the gas Companies as they now exist would be dispensed with; each pound of gas would give us just double the heat of a pound of coal; and more important than all, we should have no smoke. It may be long before these bold speculations are realised; but that they are feasible, no reasonable being who studies Dr Siemens's facts and figures can deny.

A public subscription has been opened by the Lord Mayor of London in aid of a very interesting archaeological work. Until the year 1869, the exact site of the famed Temple of Diana at Ephesus was unknown. At this time, Mr J. Wood, after several years' search, found its

remains far below the present level of the soil. He was for some time aided in his work by government grants, but for some reason or other, these were not renewed; and after a few specimens of the beautiful unearthed sculpture had been secured by the British Museum, the work stopped for want of funds. The present subscription list, opened at the Mansion House, London, is headed by some very influential names; and there is little doubt but that the money required for renewing these interesting excavations will be speedily collected.

Not so many years ago, the man who could boast that he had sailed round the world was regarded as something approaching a hero, and if not exactly on a footing with the renowned Captain Cook, he approached very nearly to that standard of excellence. Things are different nowadays, for anybody with time and money to devote to the object can put a girdle round the earth. The steamship *Ceylon*, owned by the Inter-oceanic Steam-yachting Company, has just returned from such a trip, having been absent from England for just ten months. She carried sixty passengers, who had the opportunity of remaining for some time at each of the important stopping stations. Thus, the first six weeks of the voyage were consumed in visiting the chief Mediterranean ports; after which, by the Suez route, the ship made its way to our Eastern possessions, and then onwards to China and Japan. Next came the Sandwich Islands, and the principal ports on the west coast of South America; the East-coast ports as far as Bahia next claimed attention; and the vessel on its way home called at the Canaries and at Madeira. The distance traversed was altogether thirty-seven thousand miles, the vessel returning in good condition, and reporting a clean bill of health during the voyage. We cannot imagine a more beneficial and enjoyable way of passing a year, for those who have leisure and means, than a trip in the *Ceylon*.

Another voyage, undertaken for very different reasons, has also recently terminated with the most satisfactory results. In June 1881, Mr Leigh Smith set out from Peterhead in the *Eira*, on a voyage of Arctic discovery. The little vessel, with its crew of twenty-five, all told, was sighted during the following month by a Norwegian schooner off the coast of Nova Zembla. Months passed away, and nothing more was heard of the explorers; but they were not forgotten by friends at home. Last June, a Relief Expedition was organised, under the command of Sir Allen Young, and the ship *Hope* set sail on her errand of mercy. The crew of the *Eira* were rescued, and are now in their homes once more. They had lost their vessel, which was nipped in the ice, and were, when found, subsisting on the flesh of the walrus and bear. The scientific results of the expedition were lost with the ill-fated *Eira*; but Mr Leigh Smith's journal of the voyage is saved, and will no doubt soon be in the hands of many readers. This rescue of a ship's crew will form a pleasant episode in the history of Arctic research, a history already far too full of gloom.

Another Arctic expedition has sailed from Copenhagen under the direction of Lieutenant Hovgaard. The objects of this fresh enterprise are—'To ascertain whether Franz-Josef Land

really extends to the neighbouring Cape Chelyuskin; whether the conditions of the current and ice are such that a basis for further exploration can be reached here without too great a risk; and whether the eastern coast of Franz-Josef Land trends to the northward at this point. Lieutenant Hovgaard's ship is a steamer of one hundred and fifty tons, which has been specially strengthened for contact with the ice. It carries a crew of twenty-two including the officers, and takes several sledges and Newfoundland dogs. Besides provisions for twenty-seven months, the vessel is provided with coal enough to give full steam for fifty days.

We have before alluded to the rapid destruction of timber in the United States, where no attempt seems to be made to replace by young trees those which have been felled by the lumbermen. Professor Sargent, of Harvard College, has been engaged in computing the probable time which will elapse before certain kinds of trees become exterminated; and his results will soon be known. It is said that the white pine will be gone in twenty years, and that many other trees must follow in its wake. But there are districts as yet hardly invaded by man where, owing to the liberal rainfall, different kinds of timber grow most luxuriantly. A correspondent of the *Times* lately gave a very interesting account of one of these regions; and he states that the whole of the Pacific coast from the forty-second parallel to the forty-ninth, and beyond, and from the edge of the ocean for about one hundred and twenty-five miles inland, is covered with incomparable timber. In the district of Puget Sound, the principal trees are yellow fir. They grow to an enormous height, and some of them will give squared logs one hundred and twenty-four feet in length. This region gives an average yield of forty thousand feet of timber per acre; and occasionally as much as two hundred thousand feet are found upon a single acre.

A curious but effective method of testing wines in order to determine the amount of astringent matter in them, has lately been devised by M. Girard. Astringent qualities are usually due to a tannic compound called *anotannin*, and closely related to it are several colouring-matters. There is a tendency in these matters to combine with animal tissues, and M. Girard takes advantage of this circumstance. He steepes a few lengths of so-called catgut—the fine white strings of the violinist—in the wine to be tested; and at the expiration of a day or two, the colour and astringent matter is drawn from the liquid. Comparison of cords so treated, with cords which have not been so treated, together with well-known methods of analysis, give the necessary amount of *anotannin* and colouring-matters present in the wine.

Last month we noticed M. Schmeltz's invention for recording the *duration* of rainfall; and since then the particulars of an English invention of a similar kind have been made known; but in this case the pluviometer is superior to that of M. Schmeltz, in so far as it records the *quantity* as well as the duration of rainfall. It is the invention of Mr William Gadd, Civil and Consulting Engineer, Manchester, and is manufactured by Messrs W. H. Bailey & Co., Albion Works, Salford. Mr Gadd's pluviometer

externally resembles a small upright clock-case; and is internally composed of a cylindrical vase, in which is a peculiar float, having attached thereto an upright rod, terminating in a delicate spring pencil or pointer. A drum, on which a suitably prepared diagram is fixed, turns by means of a clock attachment, so that as water enters the vase, a curved line is traced on the sheet, showing the height to which the water attains at any given time. This pluviometer is intended to be placed inside the observatory, and to be connected by means of a pipe with the collector outside. The registration of this instrument has the two great advantages of being constant and automatic.

From the *Edinburgh Evening News*, we learn that the remarkable manner in which the spectroscopic weather forecast communicated to a contemporary at the beginning of September has been verified, deserves the attention of meteorological observers. The statement was to the effect that at the beginning of a certain week the spectroscope showed a remarkable absence of watery vapour lines in the spectrum of skylight; that a directly contrary state of things in the previous week was followed by heavy rains and floods; and that a spell of dry weather might now inferentially be counted on with some little confidence. Fortunately for the farmers, that expectation was realised. Several times since the statement appeared, the sky became overcast, but the clouds invariably cleared away without rain, leaving an expanse of glorious blue such as we too seldom see. It is not for the unscientific to form any positive conclusions as to the value of such a fulfilment of a scientific forecast, but the circumstances are clearly encouraging, and it seems not extravagant to hope that the spectroscope may do for practical meteorology what the methods of observation hitherto followed have as yet failed to do. In the observation recorded, certain solar lines in the spectrum stood out clearly, which had throughout August been almost lost in a 'thicket of terrestrial water-vapour lines.' It is further interesting to notice that the suggested probability of 'rather cold sharp weather' has tallied pretty closely with the facts.

M. Regnard has been making some curious and apparently successful experiments in feeding lambs that have either been left orphans or which have been deserted by their mothers. To most people, milk would seem to be the food best fitted for the purpose; but M. Regnard has brought up his little family of lambs on a very different diet. Blood obtained from the slaughter-houses was dried, pressed, and powdered in a coffee-mill; and mixed with other food, was given in doses of ten to eighty grammes daily. The animals surpassed in weight and size even those lambs which had been nourished by their mothers; and competent judges pronounced them to be the finest specimens they had ever seen. Calves are now being reared on the same plan; and sickly children are said to receive great benefit from the strange food.

Another Frenchman, whose position at the head of a Parisian hospital for infants, should give weight to his remarks, advocates most strongly the use of asses' milk for infants deprived of their natural food. He says that he has seen this milk bring about the veritable resuscitation of little

ones; and he maintains that all institutions for the maintenance of new-born children should be provided with arrangements for keeping asses, and also goats. The milk of the goat is not much inferior to that of the ass, provided that the animal has sufficient space to roam about in, and to find its favourite food.

A strange contrast is afforded by the perusal of two papers relating to Agriculture which have lately been published. One is the summary of the Agricultural returns of Great Britain for 1882; and the other paper is the Report of the Canadian Minister of Agriculture. Seven years of bad seasons make the British returns into a very gloomy history; while the Canadian Report breathes nothing but prosperity in the present, and brilliant prospects for the future. The Canadian Minister points to the attention which is being given to the importation from Britain of pedigreed animals; and we see by the statistics given how the old country is being drained of its finest stock to give vigour to the new. It is said that from the late Show at Reading three shiploads of the finest animals went to America; and from all parts of the country come stories of foreigners buying up stock at a price with which home-buyers cannot compete. It may well be said that high prices and increased competition are affecting our agricultural progress.

An interesting relic from Pompeii has just been added to the Naples Museum. It consists of a fresco representing the Judgment of Solomon, and is unique in being the sole picture of a sacred character yet found in the buried city. Mr E. N. Rolfe, who sends to the *Times* a detailed description of the work, tells us that the drawing is poor, but that the colours are bright and in good preservation. The bodies are dwarfed, and out of proportion to the heads. Some think, from this circumstance, that the composition is intended as a caricature; but Mr Rolfe is of opinion that the heads have been exaggerated so as to allow for better facial expression. Beyond this distortion, there is apparently no caricature, the various expressions, from the agony of the real mother to the triumph of the false one, being well delineated.

A new process for treating China-grass and other fibre-producing plants—the invention of M. Favier—was lately shown in London in operation before a number of gentlemen interested in the production or use of fibre. Most of the plants in question are cultivated at long distances from the places where the fibre is prepared for market; and the new process is intended for treating the vegetable matter at the place of its growth. The advantages claimed for this procedure are principally two. In the first place, only fifteen per cent. of the raw material is ultimately utilised in the production of fibre, and therefore the carriage of much useless matter is saved; and in the second place, the fresh material is far more easily treated than that which has dried up during transport. The apparatus is simple in the extreme. It consists of a closed wooden box with a false bottom, under which runs a steam-pipe connected with a boiler. On the occasion referred to, this box was filled with a number of specimens of fibrous plants, obtained from the Botanical Gardens at Kew and Paris. After being sub-

mitted to the action of the steam for twenty minutes, the specimens were found to be ready for further treatment, the epidermis and fibre readily stripping from the wood. The cost of thus rendering the material fit for the mill is only two pounds per ton. The invention will be of great importance not only to the fibre-trade but to many of our colonies, and may still further cheapen the price of paper.

The old idea of making Manchester a port by means of a ship-canal from Liverpool, has been once more revived, and the 'Manchester Tidal Navigation Committee' are now holding an inquiry into the whole subject. The scheme has been considered by many to be visionary; but the same was thought of the Suez Canal and many other projects of an extensive character which have proved successful. The Canal would utilise the channels of the Mersey and the Irwell, and would be about thirty-seven miles in length. It would terminate at Manchester in an immense basin. There is no great engineering difficulty in the way of its accomplishment, the principal question being whether the enormous outlay entailed will bring back a sufficient return to the shareholders.

It has long been known that the Davy Safety-lamp is only safe under certain conditions. If the air in a mine be moving at a rate greater than seven feet per second, the wire-gauze surrounding the wick is no longer impervious; and the outer atmosphere, if of an inflammable nature, is certain to take fire. A Blue-book recently issued on the Causes of the Explosion in the Trimdon Grange Colliery, which took place last February, convicts the Davy Lamp as the offender; and its use will now no doubt be prohibited in all fiery mines. An accident at the West Stanley Colliery two months later has also been traced to the faulty nature of the lamps in use, although in this case the Davy Lamp was not employed. In short, a really safe mining-lamp seems just now to be a thing wanted. Whether electricity will answer all the requirements of a miner's work, we are hardly prepared to say; but it is very certain that a long time must elapse before the electric light, even if it be suited to the purpose, can be installed at all our collieries. The lamp required must give a good light, must be portable, and more than all, to meet with universal attention, it must be cheap and simple.

A very useful Act of Parliament has just come into force. Its object is 'to make better provision for inquiries with regard to boiler explosions.' That such a measure was really needed may be judged from a consideration of the many disasters which occur annually from boiler explosions—eight hundred and sixty-five explosions are recorded for the past seven years—killing and wounding more than double that number of persons. One-third of these fatalities are attributed to negligence or mismanagement; and we may feel certain that quite as large a proportion may be set down to corrosion and other forms of dilapidation which were allowed to go on unremedied in the boiler. The new Act is most stringent in its provisions, and we trust that it will have a salutary effect upon those owners of steam-power who are not too careful of the lives of their workmen.

A British patent has been secured by Messrs

Brin of Paris for the production of red and white wine from beetroot, and the product is said to resemble and to possess all the qualities of the juice of the grape. The root is cooked and pressed, and the juice is fermented in reservoirs furnished with steam-coils, so that the process can be regulated; after which water, tannin, and lastly alcohol to bring the mixture to any desired strength, are added. For white wine, the white beetroot is employed, the operations being exactly similar to those adopted in making the red wine. The colour of the latter is so brilliant, and it contains so much saccharine matter, that it is valuable for enriching grape wines which are deficient in those respects. Whether the new product is to become a help to the adulterator, or a new beverage, remains to be seen.

The railway returns for 1882 show that there are now eighteen thousand one hundred and eighty miles of railway open in the United Kingdom, involving a total paid-up capital of seven hundred and forty-five millions five hundred and nineteen thousand pounds—a sum within a few thousand pounds of being as great as the amount of the National Debt itself! This affords a striking illustration of the enormous wealth of this country—of the amazing extent of its financial resources.

This year's meeting of the Social Science Congress at Nottingham forms the twenty-fifth anniversary of its formation as a society. It was founded on July 29, 1857, at a private meeting held at the residence in Grafton Street, London, of the late Lord Brougham, who presided on the occasion. By way of signalling its successful career hitherto, the Secretary of the Association has issued a little Manual, giving a narrative of past labours and results, which will be found useful and interesting to those who watch the progress of Social Science. It is published at the office of the Association, 1, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

In papers recently read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, as well as the Society of Telegraph Engineers and Electricians, on Tests of Incandescent Electric Lamps, &c., Principal Jamieson, of the College of Science and Arts, Glasgow, has given us a valuable contribution to the subject of electric lighting. Mr Jamieson extended the tests he had previously taken at Queen Street Station and in Sir William Thomson's laboratory, and by the aid of the electrical-engineering students studying at the College of Science and Arts, he produced a number of large diagrams and curves, giving the relative candle-powers and efficiency of Swan, Edison, Maxim, and Lane-Fox lamps, from which we take the following examples, but would refer those more particularly interested to volume eleven, number forty-two, of *The Journal of the Society of Telegraph Engineers and Electricians*. Swan lamps when giving an average light of 21·6 candles, had a mean resistance of thirty-two ohms, and for every horse-power of electrical energy expended on them, produced light equal to two hundred and twenty-five standard sperm candles; or in round numbers, ten lamps, giving twenty-two candles each, can be produced from one horse-power. Edison eight-candle lamps had a resistance of sixty-one ohms when incandescent; and for every horse-power, one hundred

and thirty-eight candles were obtained, or seventeen lamps of eight candles each. As pointed out, these and the other numerous examples given by him do not include the energy that would be lost in driving the engine and dynamo, but simply the equivalent in horse-power of electrical energy expended directly on the lamps.—From a perusal which we have made of the syllabus of the Glasgow College of Science and Arts (38 Bath Street), we observe that every advantage in the way of lectures and laboratory-work is being offered to young men desirous of becoming electrical engineers and electricians.

The *Times* newspaper, in discussing the relative destructiveness of common shell and shrapnel, states that the idea that the superiority of the latter is established for all cases and under all conditions, is not quite correct. 'Exhaustive trials,' it says, 'have been made in England and in other countries, with the result that, in order to insure perfect efficiency, field-artillery should carry both of these two projectiles. The common shell is made in different forms, but the principle of its action is always the same. It contains as much powder as can be placed within its iron or steel envelope, and is intended to act by explosion, breaking down defences, setting fire to houses, and generally smashing everything which it comes across, in addition to killing a limited number of men. Common shell, also, used with a percussion fuse, so as to burst only on striking an obstacle, is very effective on firm ground, and is also extremely demoralising. The intention and effect of shrapnel are entirely different. The shrapnel shell consists of the thinnest envelope which can be found without breaking up, and this is filled almost entirely with hardened bullets. A very small charge of powder, only just enough to open the envelope, serves to liberate the bullets at the moment intended, and they then scatter like shot from a fowling-piece. Thus it will be seen that if a good many guns are firing shrapnel at the same time, and the fuses are timed so as to burst a few feet above the ground, the whole of the troops attacked are covered with a shower of bullets. Shrapnel shells have been called the man-killing projectile. Their effect against troops in the open is very great, and would be greater but for the difficulty of timing the fuse so that the projectile should burst exactly at the right moment and in the right place. Another function has lately been assigned to common shell. Incendiary stars are carried with each battery, and can be placed, when required, within the common shell. When the shell bursts, whether in the air or on the mark which it hits, the stars are scattered, and create great light and heat.'

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

COMBUSTION WITHOUT FLAME.

ABOUT a year ago, a new organisation was formed in England, called the Society of Chemical Industry, and at one of the recent meetings of the members, an interesting experiment, involving a new theory of combustion, was submitted by Mr Thomas Fletcher of Warrington, whose many ingenious inventions and discoveries we have

before had occasion to notice. The belief has often been stated, that if it were possible to produce combustion *without flame*, the temperature attained by the consumption of any fuel could be enormously increased; and it seems that Mr Fletcher has now proved that this is possible. Directing an ordinary blowpipe gas-flame upon a ball of iron wire weighing some three pounds, Mr Fletcher after a few moments blew the flame out, leaving the gas on, however, as before. The temperature immediately rose, and was steadily maintained until the iron was fused like wax. The room was darkened, but the closest examination did not show a trace of flame, although the fact that the gas was operating was proved by repeatedly relighting and extinguishing it. This flameless heat was then directed into a fireclay chamber containing a 'refractory' clay crucible, which was 'partially fused and worked into a ball like soft putty,' while the walls of fireclay were at the same time fused by what is called latent heat. The gas supply used was given by a quarter-inch pipe; and from Mr Fletcher's experiments it appears that the presence of flame is not really a sign of perfect but of imperfect combustion. It is not improbable that this demonstration of the possibility of absolutely flameless combustion may lead to important changes in the present modes of heating, many of which involve great consumption of material.

USEFUL REFORM IN POLICE INSTRUCTION.

A most useful and much desiderated branch of police education has just been introduced into the Metropolitan Force. This consists in giving the police officers a kind of surgical training sufficient to enable them to deal readily with many of the ordinary accidents to which people are liable. The society under which this training is carried out is called the St John Ambulance Association. Certificates of efficiency were a few weeks ago presented to seventy-nine London policemen; and Dr Sieveking, Physician Extraordinary to the Queen, addressing the force on that occasion, spoke of the sympathy felt by the medical profession with the objects of the Association, and of the special value to the police of the instruction imparted. He advised them to keep up their knowledge, and encouraged them to do so by referring to a case which had come under his notice, where valuable assistance was rendered to an injured lady by a policeman. Colonel Duncan, Director of the Association, also spoke, and, referring to the case of an officer who was shot in the femoral artery, and of a man who was that day reported to have bled to death in consequence of a wound from a scythe, said that any one of the men who were receiving certificates that day would probably have been able to save those lives if he had been near at the time. The objects of this Association seem to us to recommend themselves very strongly to police authorities all over the country.

THE POPULATION OF THE EARTH.

As an authority concerning the population of the different countries of the world, the publication called *Die Bevölkerung der Erde*, published by Justus Perthes of Gotha, occupies a high position. From the seventh issue of this work, which

has recently appeared, we find the total population of the globe estimated at 1,433,887,500, an apparent decrease in the estimate of 1880 of about twenty-two millions; while the recent censuses of all the great countries show an increase of over thirty millions. This is, however, partly explained by a readjustment of the population of China, which, formerly given at 434,626,500, has now been carefully revised, and estimated at 371,200,000. After this change of figures for China, Asia is set down as possessing a population of 795,591,000; this includes the two hundred and fifty-two millions for British India, and the fourteen and a half millions of the territory of Russia in Asia. The results of recent censuses in Europe show an increase in the population, which is now stated at 327,743,400, as compared with 315,929,000 in 1880—an increase of about twelve millions. Africa is set down as having a population of 205,823,260; America, 100,415,400; and Australia and Polynesia, 4,232,000. Before some of these vast numbers, the total population of the United Kingdom at last census (thirty-five millions) does not bulk largely; but this is more than counterbalanced by the vast power and influence wielded by our country in every portion of the habitable globe.

PRITHEE MADAM.

PRITHEE madam, what are you,
That you accept with scorning
Love that is honourable, true,
And constant, night and morning,
Exacting it as beauty's due?

Beauty lures, but love must bind,
And beauty's long unkindness,
Although that love were ten times blind,
Cures him of his blindness,
Gives him back his lucid mind.

Though love, it seems, less pleases you
Than admiration endless,
You'll find in such a retinue
Much that is cold and friendless,
Flatterers many, lovers few.

With these I neither sigh nor weep,
I only give you warning,
That for the future you must keep
For some one else your scorning;
I'm sick of it. Good-morning!

J. B. SELKIRK.

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1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

2d. To insure return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. MANUSCRIPTS should bear the author's full *Christian* name, surname, and address, legibly written; and should be written on white (not blue) paper, and on one side of the leaf only.

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THE NATIONAL LEDGER.

THERE is no more fascinating volume to a successful merchant than his ledger, a book which contains the record of his energy and perseverance, and on whose pages are summed up the numerous items which form the foundation of the golden superstructure he has raised. John Bull's Ledger, in the shape of a modest tenpenny blue-book entitled 'The Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom,' has recently been issued from the offices of Messrs Eyre and Spottiswoode, the Queen's printers, and in its pages of closely tabulated figures there is a story of successful business which should make it very acceptable reading to the British taxpayer. Few persons, however, care to wade through a mass of figures and tabulated statements, and we shall therefore refrain from going into the vast details of the debtor and creditor account of the immense total of nearly one hundred millions of money which represents the income and expenditure of that portion of the British Empire over which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has power for good and evil. We shall state a few of the larger facts with reference to this vast sum, and then lay before our readers some of the remarkable items which go to build up on one side or the other the colossal account of the 'business' recorded in the National Ledger.

IN spite of the Chancellor's sweeping fiscal reforms, it appears that the Custom-houses of the United Kingdom still collect the handsome sum of nineteen millions a year, and the Excise not less than twenty-seven millions. The Post-office shows a gross revenue of seven millions, notwithstanding the alterations which are being continually carried out, and the fact that several millions have been sunk as capital for the provision of better rates of pay to the telegraphists and letter-carriers.

THE Income Tax was bringing in no less a sum than ten millions before the recent increase on account of the Egyptian Expedition; while the sale of stamps realised the sum of twelve

millions. The other side of the account shows how nearly all these millions go to pay for the Army, Navy, and Civil Service; but in the hands of a skilful Chancellor of the Exchequer the national expenditure is rarely, if ever, permitted to exceed the national income. The grand total for the Army and Navy is twenty-six millions three hundred and seventy thousand pounds; that for the Civil Service, fifteen millions; interest of National Debt, twenty-eight millions two hundred and ninety thousand pounds; the Afghan War instalment, five hundred thousand pounds; the Transvaal expenses, four hundred thousand; and the Zulu War, one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. There is also a payment of ten thousand pounds for 'Secret Service.'

HAVING thus briefly described the colossal part of the debt and credit sides of this wonderful account, we will now proceed to 'take stock' of some of the items which go to make up the grand total, and the somewhat singular and interesting nature of which may not, perhaps, be generally known.

READERS of the daily papers must have often noticed that ever and anon there appears in them a paragraph, inserted in some corner of the journals, to the effect that 'the Chancellor of the Exchequer begs to acknowledge the receipt of two halves of a five-pound note from A. B. on account of Income Tax.' This is termed Conscience-money, and amounted last year to no less a sum than five thousand three hundred and forty-six pounds. The Suez Canal shares brought in at five per cent, two hundred thousand pounds; while the Colonies contributed the sum of two hundred and fifteen thousand pounds towards our national defences.

FEW people are aware of the fact that in return for permission to issue a paper currency, the Bank of England pays into the Exchequer an annual sum of one hundred and thirty-eight thousand five hundred and seventy-eight pounds. The coinage of silver at the Mint last year brought in a profit of one hundred and sixty-seven thousand pounds, and the bronze coinage nearly

thirty-one thousand pounds. Sovereigns are, it appears, coined gratuitously; while no less a sum than four hundred and eighty-four pounds in old copper coin was melted down for alloy. Even the sweepings of the Mint floors brought into the Exchequer the sum of six hundred and thirty-four pounds five shillings and elevenpence.

We are somewhat surprised to find an item of eleven hundred pounds accruing to the Crown on account of some guano islands of which the nation appears to be the proprietor; while 'small branches of the hereditary revenue'—whatever these may mean—are credited with the sum of twenty-eight thousand pounds per annum.

As all 'wrecks and derelicts' upon the coasts of the United Kingdom are claimed by the Crown, the national income from this source is augmented by the sum of one hundred and sixty-nine pounds eleven and ninepence. This small sum is in itself a practical testimonial to the excellence of the work carried on by the National Lifeboat Institution. Beside this, the rights and interests of the Crown in the foreshores of the kingdom brought in last year two hundred and seventy-six pounds seventeen shillings and ninepence.

Passports are evidently far from being as obsolete as some persons think, for no less than four thousand were issued by the Foreign Office during the year, the fees on which amounted to four hundred and nine pounds. Our consuls abroad paid into the national Exchequer through the Foreign Office nearly fifty-two thousand pounds on account of fees received by them in the exercise of their consular duties.

One interesting item in this long account is that of the Tower of London, which is credited with the sum of two thousand two hundred and seventy-six pounds on account of the fees paid by visitors to view the Crown jewels and armouries, &c. Another item stands for 'Fees of Honour' in the Queen's Household, by which is probably meant the fines inflicted on its members for disregarding certain rules of etiquette or propriety. The sum credited to this source was last year fifty-five pounds eleven shillings and sixpence. Another item in connection with the Royal Household is the 'Contributions for Keys,' which consists of small payments made by privileged individuals for admittance into the royal precincts of the various palace-grounds and demesnes. This and various other items, such as 'Grazing and other rents, venison fees, receipts for old materials [rags and bones?], timber, and live-stock,' together produce the respectable sum of five thousand and forty pounds.

The wages and effects of deceased seamen revert to the Crown if not claimed within six years; and it may be imagined that the sum invested on this account must be very large, seeing that the interest alone brought in eleven hundred pounds last year.

We will close our list of items on the debit side of the National Ledger with those standing under the head of 'Convict Labour.' The Exchequer received during the past year a sum of two thousand three hundred pounds on account of profits on farms cultivated by convicts, and the large sum of sixteen thousand pounds for profits on convict manufactures, exclusive of another sum of eight thousand eight hundred pounds for 'profits on prisoners' labour.'

On turning to the Credit side of the Ledger, we find ourselves floundering among a mighty host of state pensioners, some of a perpetual nature and others but temporary. As a handsome item of compensation for the 'abolition of office,' we may *en passant* quote the case of the Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall and his deputy, who receive for 'loss of office on the abolition of the duties on the coinage of tin,' &c., an annual allowance of seventeen thousand pounds!

The Royal Family of course head the list of annuitants, commencing with the Crown Princess of Germany (Princess Royal), eight thousand pounds, and ending with the Princess Mary (Duchess of Teck), who receives two thousand. The whole amount under this head, not including of course the amounts granted this year on the marriage of the Duke of Albany, is one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds.

Next in order come the Civil List pensions, which amount in the aggregate to the sum of twenty-two thousand five hundred and eighty-nine pounds. The names of the recipients of these pensions are not given, probably on account of the number, as there must be quite an army of them, seeing that not more than twelve hundred pounds per annum is granted to the Crown by parliament for this purpose. Thirty-eight thousand one hundred and sixty-six pounds per annum is absorbed by the pensions for distinguished military services. At the head of this list stands the famous Duke of Marlborough, to whom and to whose descendants 'for ever' parliament granted the yearly sum of four thousand pounds, beside a splendid palace to live in and estates around it. Lord Napier of Magdala closes the list with a pension of two thousand pounds, which is to last for two lives only.

Twenty thousand four hundred and thirty-four pounds per annum is the amount absorbed by Political and Civil Service pensioners, amongst whom for the last time will figure the late Lord Beaconsfield, Sir George Grey, Mr. Milner Gibson, and Mr. Spencer Walpole. In this list, the man who gets the most handsome allowance is Lord Clarence Paget, who receives a pension of twelve hundred pounds per annum as an ex-First Secretary of the Admiralty, in addition to his retired pay of two guineas a day as a vice-admiral. The veteran Corn-law abolitionist, Mr. C. P. Villiers, also draws a pension of twelve hundred a year as an ex-Cabinet minister.

Forty-one thousand pounds is the amount of the pensions awarded for judicial services to the state, the names of three Lord Chancellors, at five thousand a year each—namely, Lords Cairns, Hatherley, and Selborne, being on last year's list. Lord Hatherley has since died; and Lord Selborne, being Mr. Gladstone's present Lord Chancellor, of course receives a salary of ten thousand

pounds, the pension being suspended in the meantime. This does not include Ireland, which has a Judicial pension list of over twenty-two thousand pounds.

It is rather amusing to see with what arithmetical precision the pension is stopped by the Treasury on the day of decease; not a fraction more than was absolutely due to the departed pensioner being paid to his heirs or administrators.

The hereditary pensions to the heirs of the Duke of Schomberg, which Thackeray ridiculed in his ballad of the *Battle of Limerick*, and amounting to nine hundred and eighty-four pounds, still appear in that portion of the list which may be termed a collection of 'curiosities.' The heirs and representatives of the founder of the Quaker City, Mr Penn, still receive the pension of four thousand pounds per annum granted them by parliament 'for ever.' The Earl of Kinnoull receives a pension of one thousand six hundred and twenty pounds four shillings, on account of certain 'four-and-a-half-per-cent. duties,' in addition to an hereditary pension granted to one of his ancestors by King Charles II.

Many persons are still living and enjoying pensions granted them in the reigns of George III., George IV., and William IV.; whilst there is also a payment of thirty-two pounds six shillings and fourpence to 'persons who suffered by the Irish Rebellion of 1798.' Altogether, the gross amount for pensions and annuities is over three hundred thousand pounds, which is, after all, but a small amount compared with that wonderful income of nearly a hundred millions sterling, which is shown on the debit side of the National Ledger as the result of the untiring industry and splendid perseverance of the inhabitants of the British Isles.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—'ALL IS READY,' SAID VAL QUIETLY. 'TELL YOUR MISTRESS.'

It was the last night in June, and a score of jovial young gentlemen were making merry at Lumby Hall. There were two elders with them—Mr Lumby and Mr Jolly, and but one of the invited guests was absent. The ladies staying at the Hall to attend the morrow's ceremony were a little aggrieved by the bachelor party, and the drawing-room was dull. The general feminine opinion was unfavourable to Mr Lumby's projection; but the old gentleman himself was in high-feather amongst the young fellows gathered about his son, and knew nothing of the muffled petticoat rebellion. He was growing stronger every day, and had already, without much mental difficulty, gone through terms of settlement with the lawyer, making over half his share in the City House to Gerard. He sat there and sipped a glass of wine, and chatted gaily, if somewhat childishly, for a time, and then withdrew, leaving the bride's father to keep the younger blood in order, if it should need a restraining hand. The elder Jolly was glorious, and had assumed so juvenile an air, that beside the bald-headed Reginald he looked young,

and the two might almost have changed relationships.

'Where on earth is Val Strange?' cried Gerard. 'Don't any of you men know?'

'There's been something odd about Val lately,' said one of the guests; 'I began to think yesterday that he had a tile loose.'

Reginald thought that possibly he might be able to throw a little light on the reason of Val's absence. If you love a woman yourself, it is not altogether easy at the last moment of losing her to congratulate the man who carries her away from you; and the difficulty seemed likely to be increased when the congratulations were expected to extend over the time occupied by a dinner and an evening meeting like the present. So that, knowing what he did, it would have been easy to explain Val's late eccentric conduct—if it had not been impossible to offer such an explanation.

At this sort of gathering there are generally one or two people who are eager to make speeches. The elder Jolly was absolutely overflowing with Disraelian eloquence, but he had to save himself for the effort of the morrow. He had written his speech, and had committed it to memory; and it was his belief that this oratorical effort, when it came to be produced, would sparkle like fireworks. The audience would include a good many of the county magnates, and he felt that they would be almost worthy to listen to his carefully-prepared impromptus. A bashfully-eager gentleman in a corner was being urged by his companions to rise; and had at length, in spite of himself, given so decided a negative, that the attempt to persuade him had been almost abandoned, when Mr Jolly, discerning that beyond a doubt the tide of speechmaking, if it once set in, would drift his way, burned so eagerly for a chance, that he beat a tumbler upon the table and cried: 'Gentlemen, Mr Whetham is longing to address us.' The Cicero of the corner coterie being thus publicly signalled-out for attention arose, smiled vacuously, played in a dégage fashion with his watch-chain, and with a curious springy motion in the legs, unburdened his soul in manner following: 'Gentlemen all. And Mr Jolly. Had extreme happiness—knowing—friend—Lumby—years. No hesitation—saying—admirable fellow—calculated—perform—duties—citizen—most satisfactory manner. Call upon you—therefore—drink his health—musical honours. Really sorry—can't express—feelings—overwhelming at the moment—more flowing language. Gentlemen, Mr Gerard Lumby.' Then he sat down, and wondered where his speech had gone to, and whilst he wondered, the toast was hailed with enthusiasm, and the young gentlemen assembled sang, *For he's a jolly good fellow*, with such heartiness that the startled domestics rose in the servants' hall, and the ladies in the drawing-room looked at each other in amazement. Lady Farham, relict of Sir Samuel, late of Mincing Lane, and mother-in-law to George Lumby, murmured to her married daughter that it was really like a tavern, and fell into a stony contemplation of the wall-paper, from which she was aroused with difficulty. She said afterwards, in view of the events of the night, that she had quite expected a judgment.

Gerard returned thanks with hearty brevity,

and then somebody proposed the health of the bride. He was a very young gentleman, with a habit of saying in the duller portions of his oration—'In short, gentlemen, as the poet says'—and at these moments the guests looked towards him with a look as of awakening interest. But as he always forgot what the poet said and toiled off into prose, they settled back again in a manner disconcerting to the speaker's feelings. Finally, when the young gentleman had made half-a-dozen abortive efforts to recall the poet's utterances, he sat down; and the guests cheered for the bride, and drank her health with much ardour; and Mr Jolly arose. It was one of those supreme moments of temptation which occur not more than once in a lifetime, and he yielded. He spoke the speech he had prepared for the wedding breakfast; and having delivered himself, sat down and contemplated the draft which would be made upon him in twelve hours' time, and he a mental bankrupt. After such an effort as he had already made, he knew that great things would be expected of him. He had fired his *feu de joie* a day too soon, and the consciousness that he had no powder left, was indescribably depressing. He felt that the reputation he had already created would be fatal to him. But suddenly a ray of light illumined his mind, and he became tranquil and even happy. He resolved that he would be too much affected to say anything!

'When the cat's away the mice will play,' said Hiram Search to himself as he stepped forth from the gates of Lumby Hall into the softly-clouded summer night. 'They'll prob'ly be rather lively over at the Grange this evening, an' I'll just walk over an' have a look at Mary.' He lit a pipe, and walked comfortably, thinking of the morrow's wedding and the improvement it brought in his own chances. He would not be single much longer, though he was less in a hurry to marry than he had been. Not because his affections had in the least degree cooled, but because Mary was now provided for, and the old reason for desiring at once to assume a position in which he could protect her had been removed. As members of one household, they would be together, and Hiram looked forward to a period of courtship which bade fair to be extremely pleasant. He had got over half his walk, when the moon shone out suddenly with so charming a lustre that he paused to observe it. As the cloud which had hitherto obscured the fullness of her splendour slowly sailed away, moved by some wind too high for him to feel its faintest breath, the broad silver light seemed bit by bit to drive back the shadow over the fields towards the sea. The moonbeams with that wall of retreating darkness beyond them made the distance dimmer than it had been, and almost shut the water from sight. But suddenly they touched and silvered the foam of the little breakers on the sand of the bay, and passed along as if floating out to sea, and in the midst of the belt of light he discerned the snowy sail of a vessel as it rounded Daffin Head. 'I guess that's Mr Strange's yacht,' said Hiram to himself. The little craft had been creeping a good deal about the coast for the past week or two; and Hiram, like the rest of the inhabitants of those parts, had become familiar with her aspect.

In the mind of a fanciful man, thousands of odd little premonitions which never come to anything, rise and float about and go again, to be forgotten. But if ever by chance one of these idle fancies is fulfilled, it becomes memorable, and erects itself into a precedent. Perhaps to Hiram's mind there was an unrecognised sense of something furtive suddenly revealed in the little craft stealing round the headland in the mist of night and being thus made visible. He had taken a dislike to Val Strange, and he had been exercised by the discovery of the photograph. There had been a latent feeling of resentment in his mind that evening at Val's absence from his friend's dinner-party, and Hiram had been inclined to think that Mr Strange was 'hankering'—that was his phrase—after the boss's little gell. Being thus predisposed to think ill of Mr Strange, and having some ground for suspicion already, he absolutely surmised that the *Mew's-wing* might be hanging about to carry off Constance. He smiled at the thought, and pooh-pooed it, and put it away, as being altogether too preposterous to be believed in. And yet it had a sort of hold upon him, and made him feel unhappy and discontented with himself.

'If there *should* be anythin' in it,' he said at last, 'what a dog I should feel if I'd neglected this curious kind o' warnin'. Does *seem* kind of like a warnin', somehow. Such things hev been, I know. Why, Hiram, s'pose you make a fool of yourself, and look into this matter. 'Twon't be the first time you've gone a fool's arrand, and nobody need know what an ass you are. You ain't afraid o' me laughing at you, air you, Hiram?' He walked on swiftly; and bodily motion adding, as it often does, to mental excitement, he grew out of the cheerfully cynical mood in which he had started, and came to something like genuine fear and earnestness. When he saw the lights of the Grange, he chose the turf side of the lane rather than the resounding road, and ran crouching along as if he were hunting something. Near the gates he paused, and a voice struck upon his ear. His heart began to beat, and he clenched his teeth and his hands and listened. The excitement he was in was more than nine-tenths self-created, and he knew it, and rather scorned himself for it. Strain his ears as he would, he could hear no more than the murmur of the voice, and could not make out a spoken word, until, to his complete surprise, he heard his own name, singularly coupled. Two words came clearly—'Marry Hiram'—and then the voice went humming on again inaudibly. 'Marry Hiram?' thought the listener. 'Am I dreamin'? What on airth is this?' He crept nearer, and heard the voice more clearly.

'You must know,' it said in low and urgent tones, 'that unless she has a female companion, she will be laid open to such scandalous suspicions that there will be no removing them. You will have no responsibility. It is not in your power to prevent her from going. I will land you at Swansea to-morrow; and directly after the wedding, you can return; and with five hundred pounds in hand, you can marry at once. Think, you foolish girl, how few the chances you are likely to have of making so much money.'

Hiram needed no sight of the speaker to know that it was Val Strange. He seemed in

a very whirlpool of amazement, and could scarcely believe that his premonition was coming true, clearly as he heard the words and plainly as they carried their own meaning.

'Oh,' said another voice, and though Hiram was prepared to hear it, he started at it, so that he almost betrayed his presence, 'Hiram would never forgive me—never! He is fond of Mr Lumby, and he spoke of him many a time before he went into his service. And, O Mr Strange, you have been very kind to me'—(What was this? asked the listener, with a new madness in his veins)—but is it fair to run away with her the day before the wedding?'

'Will you come?' asked Val impatiently. 'Yes, or no. Five hundred pounds—think what it means—wealthy friends for life, who will never forget the service you have done them—think what it means. Will you come?'

'O Mr Strange,' cried Mary, 'I dare not. It all seems wicked, and Hiram would never forgive me.'

'You are not so grateful as you pretended to be,' said Val, under his breath, but with anger in his tones. 'You might never have seen Hiram again but for me. What would you have done if I had not befriended you at Southampton?'

The listener in the midst of his amazement breathed more freely. He had heard *that* story. So Val Strange was the unknown benefactor upon whom he had so often called down blessings in his heart. It softened somewhat the rage he felt against him.

'If it were not for Hiram,' cried the girl.

'Hush!' said Val. 'Do not speak so loud. Come, decide. Your mistress will not move without you; and if you will not come, you have wrecked her life for ever. Ask what you will. If you are trying to make the terms for such a trifling service higher, ask what you will. Think what this foolish delay may mean. Will you come?'

'No,' said the girl, but in a voice in which the listener could read a tone of yielding. He crept nearer, until he laid a hand upon the gray stone of the gateway pillar. The gates were open, and the pair stood just within them. Val pressed the yielding girl harder.

'Suppose somebody tried to make you marry a man you did not love, and Hiram wanted to save you and to take you away, would that be wicked? And if you had a friend who was too hard-hearted to come with you and save you from scandal, would you forgive her?'

'I will go,' said little Mary.

'No,' said Hiram, stepping into the moonlight; 'I reckon you won't.'

They stood astounded before him. Mary shrieked, and ran towards the house; but Val was rooted to the spot he stood on. For one awful moment he expected Gerard's form to appear behind Hiram's, and almost listened for the reproaches of the friend he had endeavoured to betray. But he was no coward after all, and his nerves sprang up like steel as he faced the intruder.

'What brings you here?' he asked.

'I can't speak lightly of sacred things, Mr Valentine Strange,' said Hiram; 'and I won't say what hand guided me here to stop your

villainy. But I'm here in time. Drop it. I shan't break my master's faithful heart by telling him the plot I lighted on. But I score off you. I do now, re'ly.'

'Do you?' said Val with desperate softness, toying with something that hung at his watch-chain and glittered in the moonlight. 'Are you sure?'

'I'm sure of this much, anyway,' said Hiram, drawing on the words—'I shan't clear out of this 'fore you do, an' it'll bother you to take my boss's gall away while I stand 'by.' Val raised the glittering something to his lips and blew a soft clear whistle. Quick as lightning, Hiram leaped at him, and though too late to check the call, he gripped his wrists like iron, and began to haul him down the carriage-way, resolved on holding him and alarming the household. They could not all be in the plot, and some of the men-servants would surely be ready to do a little for the honour of the house they served.

'Come here and help me,' said Val in a soft and quiet voice. 'Hold this fellow, and do not let him go, till we are safe on board.' Before the words had left his lips, Hiram released his hands and struck him down. Turning, he saw three seamen in the gateway, and grasped the whole situation in a flash. It would take the yacht an hour to round the headland, and he felt sure that he could reach Lumby Hall in a quarter of an hour. That would give time to alarm Gerard, to saddle horses, and to gallop here and intercept the flight, or even to pull out and board the yacht. He stood a second, and then burst past them at a leap, and recovering from a stumble in the road which had almost wrecked his purpose, he sped down the lane like an arrow.

Val was on his feet again. 'Follow him!' he cried. 'Double across the fields, and stop him at any cost. He is making for Lumby Hall,' he panted, running beside his men, already in pursuit. 'This way, and you will cut him off before he reaches Welbeck Bay.'

But as they broke through the hedge, they saw that Hiram, nearly a hundred yards ahead, had shot through a gap, and was taking advantage of the short-cut home. He ran like a hare, and at every stride increased the distance between himself and his pursuers. Val called them off, and they came back breathing heavily, from the brief burst they had made.

'You have the luggage?' he asked.—One of them answered 'Yes.'—'Run down with it to the boat at once. Two of you can carry it.—You, Thomson, stay behind with me, and take care of the maid.' It was evident that he had taken the crew of the yacht into his confidence, and probable that he had even feared some failure in his plans. The two men set briskly off; and Val, leaving the third at a little distance from the gateway, walked down the drive, stopping a moment to adjust his disordered dress. The back of the house was in complete darkness as he passed it, but there was a sound of laughter in the servants' quarters. He went by lightly, and entered at the open windows of the dining-room. There he found Mary. She was crying bitterly, but with little noise.

'All is ready,' said Val quietly. 'Tell your mistress.'

'I dare not go,' sobbed the girl.
 'Your master will be here in half an hour,' he answered; 'and he will know that you were in the plot. You must go—you dare not stay.' The girl wrung her hands, and stood irresolute.—'Go!' he said sternly; and she obeyed him. A minute later, Constance glided into the room with the maid behind her. Her hand, as she laid it on Val's arm, trembled as a steel spring vibrates when shaken; but without a word on either side they stepped on to the lawn, and Mary followed, travelling the Primrose Way like her betters, and like them, finding it unpleasant, and less smooth than downright honour's roughest footpath. They glided noiselessly round the house, and noiselessly along the gravelled carriage-drive. There, at the gate the seaman came from the shadows and gave an arm to the weeping maid. Once in the lane, Constance walked with a firm step; but the high-strung tremor of her hand warned Val against addressing her. Ten minutes' walking brought them to the shore, and they could see the boat that awaited them. Constance knew nothing of the alarm; but Val in his mind's eye saw the long figure flying over the fields in the moonlight, and in his strained and exalted fancy could almost hear the beat of his hurried footsteps. He watched Hiram in fancy breasting the iso which led to Lumby Hall, and he saw the old friend he had so wronged, sitting happy and exulting in the thought of to-morrow's happiness, and knowing nothing of the blow the panting messenger came in haste to deal. Val had won his stake, and nothing could come between him and Constance now; but he was so far from happy, that he could well-nigh have surrendered his triumph. Yet for her sake, if not his own, there could be no surrender, and he must be tender to her and true to her. For many a day to come, he would have to fill the place of all the world to her, and he vowed that he would do it. If the heart-service and perpetual worship of the man she loved could make her happy, her life should go without a cloud. But even as these vows rose in his heart, he seemed to see and hear the hurried light that carried the awful news.
 'Give me your hand, my love,' he said gently, and helped Constance into the boat, and leading her to a seat, wrapped a cloak about her tenderly. The maid followed with her attendant seaman. 'Give way, men!' he said gravely and quietly. The bow of the boat lay upon the beach; but two of the men pushed her off, and leaped in as she floated. Val took the tiller ropes, and steered to where in the distance the yacht's white sails gleamed. His thoughts were still with the flying messenger, and followed him until the fatal message was delivered. 'He knows by this time,' he thought. It was not easy for Val Strange to be a sinner against friendship and honour. An almost unbearable pang ran through his heart as he pictured Gerard listening to the news.

Hiram's listening ear told him that pursuit had ceased; but he only laid himself out the harder, and ran until his chest seemed filled with fire, and every breath he drew was a sob. As he ran, he planned. So light a wind was blowing that the yacht could make but little headway, and a well-manned boat might even

take her up. At Lumby Hall they were as near to her as they were at the Grange, unless she had gone more rapidly than he counted. Hiram's hat had gone already in the leap through the gap, and now finding that the coat he wore pulled him down, he slipped from it; but in all his anxiety and haste, he marked the place in which he dropped it, and resolved to return for it on the morrow. The incongruity of such a care at such a moment struck him with ridiculous force, and he had to fight down a half-hysterical desire to laugh. A two miles' run is a heavy business for a man who is out of training, and Hiram, before he reached the gates, had run himself almost to a stand-still, and his most urgent efforts took him scarcely faster than his average walk. But he toiled on, and coming near the house, made a final spurt, and dashed in at the doorway headlong. The venerable butler was the first to meet him, and seeing him running along the corridor in a half-stagger, stopped him.

'Mr Search!' cried the butler in amazement, 'what is it? Thieves?'

'No,' gasped Hiram—'Mr Gerard—fetch Mr Gerard. Call him out here. Quick, quick, quick!'

The butler, with one glance of astonishment, ran to the room in which the party sat assembled. Mr Jolly had just arrived at that happy conclusion already recorded, when the old servant entered and with a flustered air whispered to his young master. 'There's something wrong, sir. Will you come out, please?'

Gerard arose and followed him, and came on Hiram, leaning against the wall, sobbing for breath. The butler paused there, and the young man stopped also, with a look of wonder at Hiram's wild face and figure.

'Call up all your pluck,' said Hiram; 'you'll want it. Valentine Strange has bolted with—'

'What?' roared Gerard, and taking Hiram by the shoulders, he shook him like a reed.

'Miss Jolly,' gasped Hiram, and fell back against the wall, panting and glaring.

The young man's wild cry brought an inquiring face to the open door of the room he had just quitted.

'You lying villain!' said Gerard hoarsely, glaring back at Hiram.

'Gone aboard the yacht,' said Hiram, struggling so to speak that it was terrible to look at him. 'Don't waste a minute. Go to the boats. You may catch them yet.'

The corridor was filled. 'What is it?' asked one, laying a hand on Gerard's shoulder. 'Nothing wrong?'

Gerard shook him off and burst into awful laughter. 'This dog,' he said, turning an ashen face on Hiram, 'has a reputation as a humorist. He has been drinking, and has brought a jest home with him.'

'Don't waste a minute,' gasped Hiram again, struggling upright and seizing Gerard by the arm.

'If I thought your tale was true, you drunken rascal,' answered Gerard, 'do you think I would take a step to bring her back again?'

'To bring her back again?' repeated Reginald, pushing his way through the crowd.—'Lumby, what is this?'

Gerard pointed him to Hiram, and as he did so, there was a look upon his face which made the messenger's heart ache.

'Valentine Strange has bolted with Miss Jolly. They're aboard the yacht.' He tried to whisper, but his broken breath made each word a sob, and every man standing in the corridor heard the news.

'There's a pretty story, isn't it?' said Gerard, turning on Reginald. His face, beyond all words, was terrible to see.—'Is it true?' he said, laying his heavy hands on the little man's shoulders, and rocking him slightly to and fro—'is it true?' The two men looked at each other. Such a look! There was not a sound heard but that of Hiram's laboured breathing. 'He believes it,' said Gerard. 'The man is her brother, and he believes it.' He threw his hands aloft and burst into laughter so wild and loud, that the frightened women-folk came streaming downstairs, and the servants came up and peered into the corridor. 'Do you believe it?' he cried, turning upon Mr Jolly.

'No, sir,' cried he. 'It's an infamous fabrication, an abominable fabrication.' He was white to the very lips; but it was evident that he did not believe it. 'Reginald,' he cried blusteringly, 'deny this infamous scandal.' As he turned upon his son with this appeal, Gerard turned upon him too.

'Denying it will not help us, sir,' said Reginald. 'Let us get our carriage and go home.'

'What?' cried the father. 'You believe it?'

'We may be of use at home,' said Reginald doggedly. Even Mr Jolly read despair in his face and voice.

'Gentlemen,' said Gerard, in a loud voice, 'let us go back to our wine.'

His mother struggled through the crowd, and the men made room for her. 'Gerard!' she said, touching him. He fell suddenly on his knees before her, and catching at her hands, he burst into such weeping as no man there had ever heard before.

THE ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES EN FÊTE.

THE year 1882 will be remembered in Cambridge as marking the commencement of a new order of things. A very salutary change in the customary procession of events in the May Term has brought it about that this year, for the first time, the two great English universities were simultaneously *en fête*. 'Commem' at Oxford and the 'May week' at Cambridge are as much recognised institutions as 'Greats' and Tripos, as the Vice-chancellor and the Senior Proctor; and he who should suggest the abolition or curtailment of either of the university carnivals, would be regarded as a revolutionary innovator, no less dangerous than if he had proposed to pull down 'Tom Quad,' or to let out as building-plots the university cricket-ground. Whether the coincidence of the two events this year made any perceptible difference in the number of visitors to either town, is a question which would agitate the minds of the undergraduate element but little, provided their own particular contingent of friends did not give the preference to invitations from

the rival seat of learning, and that the lady-visitors generally were up to the average in personal attractions, dancing powers, and capacity for appreciative sight-seeing.

Cambridge, it is true, had the advantage over her rival in being able to offer the attraction of her annual May boat-races, in addition to the more ordinary and less exciting amusements common to both; and though the pleasure is largely dependent on genial sky and favourable breezes, there is something very alluring to strangers in the series of struggles to be witnessed in the Gut, the Plough, and the Long Reach, from the vantage-ground of Grassy Corner or Ditton Meadows. Long lines of eager young gownsmen, each in the bright uniform of his College Club, rush panting up the tow-path, uttering a babel of discordant but exhilarating cries of encouragement to their champions on the water. One by one the graceful craft appear in sight, the oarsmen swinging like a piece of perfect mechanism, the blades flashing in the evening sun, the coxswain anxiously calculating how closely he dare shave the awkward corner looming in the distance; and how soon he shall venture to call upon Stroke for that final spurt, which shall bring the taper bow within bumping distance of the boat which they pursue. Stroke by stroke the interval is lessened; the cries on the bank grow louder and more excited, as the partisans of each urge them on to greater efforts. The pursuers pull themselves together in obedience to their coach's warning voice, as their boat shows a tendency to roll when it meets the wash thrown from the oars of the leading crew. Another twenty yards, and the word is given. The bow of the pursuing craft overlaps the stern of the pursued; a moment more, and with the fresh impetus of a final spurt, 'cox' ventures to edge over to the side of the vanquished; and amid a turmoil of shouts and splashing, up goes the hand of the steersman of the leading boat. The bump is acknowledged, and each crew ceases from its exertions; the vanquished to mourn over their futile efforts, the victors to receive the congratulations of their friends on having carried the college colours one place higher on the river. But 'the cry is still they come.' One after another follow the rest of the boats, some repeating the scene already enacted, others more happy in being able to row easily over the course, unpressed by their antagonists. And so the day's racing draws to a close; and the crowd of spectators return, some by road, others by water, to prepare for the evening entertainments, wherein the rejoicings of the successful are to be celebrated, and the chagrin of the conquered forgotten.

So the week passes in a constant round of festivity. Garden-parties in the college grounds; picnics up the Granta and the Isis; concerts and balls at night; and not least, the glorious music and impressive services of Sunday, in time-

honoured chapels, whose walls exhibit great names of those who in their turn have studied and worshipped in those sacred precincts—such are the attractions which the universities hold out to their summer visitors, and which are little likely to be forgotten by those who have the good fortune to take part in them.

That the change which has this year brought about the coincidence of these gala-days at Oxford and Cambridge, is a wise one, it is impossible to question. In previous years, it has been the general custom at Cambridge, to fix the boat-races, the centre upon which all the other gaieties hinge, for as nearly as might be the last week in May. By this means, the longest possible time for practice and training was secured between the Easter vacation and the date at which the majority of undergraduates, having 'kept their term,' were anxious to escape. But one unpleasant formality remained to be got over between the gay 'May week' and the commencement of the Long Vacation—namely, the college examinations, by the result of which prizes and scholarships are awarded, and the progress made during the past year is tested. Hence, during that short spell of dissipation, the luckless undergraduate whose prospects depended on his securing a scholarship, or whose heart was set on proving that his time and money had not been thrown away, had this Damoclesian sword hanging over his head, warning him to desist from enjoyment, innocent in itself, but probably unsettling in its effects, or else to give up the hope he cherished. To expect that the pleasant temptation thus actually spreading its lures in front of him would fail to overcome his good resolutions, would have been to ask too much from youthful human nature; and there is little room for doubting that many a prize has just been missed, and many a reward of honest hard work has eluded the seeker's grasp, owing to some accidental meeting with a too fascinating partner at a college ball or river-side picnic, whose bright eyes have temporarily at least proved too much for their admirer's good resolutions, and have eliminated Greek roots and Roman antiquities from his mind just at a critical moment in his career.

But now, as we have already noted, times are changed. It has seemed good to the authorities to relegate many of the final university examinations to the summer instead of the winter terms. The claims of the dread Tripos have been recognised, and in deference to the schools, the boat-races and their attendant festivities have been postponed to such a date, that one and all can indulge, so far as their pockets and their inclinations permit, with a clear conscience, and a happy recollection that the ordeals are behind instead of before them; and that that last *valse* or extra glass of champagne will not imperil their prospects and imbitter their reflections for the ensuing twelve months.

To such as these, and to the multitude of admiring visitors who honour their brothers, cousins, or male friends more remote, with their presence during the gay week, there are few pleasanter oases to look back upon in the desert of workaday life. Venerable college buildings and ancient academical pleasure-grounds are never to be seen

to greater advantage than when the cicerone is a light-hearted young gowmsman, full of the dignity and importance of quasi-possession of the place, and anxious to impress his party with a sense of the grandeur and beauty of their surroundings. The 'sweet girl graduate,' flourishing as that race appears to be, has not yet so fully taken possession of our universities as to render feminine society and girlish voices every-day adjuncts of college life; and perhaps their very rarity in those monastic precincts goes far to increase the charm which their presence undoubtedly adds to the otherwise sombre surroundings.

But there is one class of visitors for whom a peep at the university at the height of its carnival is by no means an unmixed pleasure. The man who only a few short years ago was himself one, and perhaps a leading one, of the throng of pleasure-seekers, and who is led by the hope of renewing the associations of those old days to revisit his former college, after spending a longer or shorter interval in the actual battle of life, cannot fail to find an element of sadness mingled with the pleasure which attends his return to the familiar scenes. On the one hand, he meets and re-greets a few of those who in his undergraduate days were his every-day companions, his rivals it may be in the contest for college honours, his comrades in joint struggles on the river and the athletic ground, now sobered down into university dignitaries and college 'dons,' but still capable of unbending at the recollections of boyish freaks and harmless escapades, the like of which it is now their duty to frown upon in others. But on the other hand, he will miss and look in vain for many a former intimate, and many a familiar face. Though unconsciously of increasing age so long as he is among his fellow-toilers in the busy world, he will suddenly find himself aged and *passé* here, and will realise that between him now, and the careless undergraduate of former years, there is a great gulf fixed, which nothing can bridge over; and he will feel more clearly than ever the increasing cares and anxieties of increasing years.

But perhaps the changes wrought by time will never be borne in upon him so keenly as when, after a quiet twilight chat over the doings of old times with one of those who shared in those early days his day-dreams and his confidences, he turns to leave his friend's rooms, and by force of long familiar habit, enters the doorway, and climbs the dark staircase at the head of which are the rooms which he once called his own. Reaching the 'oak,' he suddenly misses the latchkey from his pocket, and in an instant his mistake dawns upon him. A strange name is painted on the lintel; a stranger is sleeping unconsciously in the little inner closet which served him in his turn as a bedroom; and he realises, with a sensation of pain, that the very spot which was once his home, the scene of many an hour's toil, of many a good resolution destined to bear so little fruit—it may be of many a bitter disappointment, keenly felt, bravely struggled against, and manfully overcome—is now closed against him by right, and is in turn the home of one whose very name is strange to him, to whom also his own name and his own past life

are utterly unknown, save in so far as the college traditions may record his doings—now long past and insignificant in worth—in the cricket-field, the river, or the schools.

MY NEW FRIEND.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

WHEN the sale was over, and the brokers had all gone— But stay! This seems rather too abrupt a style of commencing my story, as the reader may perhaps wish to know how it was we had the brokers in at all. Well, mine was an experience which is only too common, and was distinguished by no special features of romance, or even of pathos, although it was painful enough to me as well as to Susan, my wife.

My name is Matley—Luke Matley; a clerk in the city of London, plodding along pretty contentedly at a hundred and forty pounds a year; and I was engaged to be married to Miss Everett—the Susan just referred to—and our ambition being of a limited kind, our marriage was to take place when my salary was raised to one hundred and fifty pounds, which, at the time when I have decided upon commencing my narrative, I hoped would be in the next year. But unluckily—I may say so now, although I did not think so then—a distant relative, from whom I had entertained no expectations, died, and left me about a thousand pounds. Susan and myself, as I need hardly say, got married without waiting for the expected advance.

This would not have mattered so greatly, in fact it would have been the best thing I could have done, had we acted as we had originally intended, which was to have invested nearly the whole of this money in the purchase of a couple of little houses, and plodding on with my clerkship as before. But, as ill-luck would have it, I was in the wholesale wine-trade, and one of our travellers—a very clever fellow I always considered him, and so without doubt he was—had recently left, to set up in business for himself; and he showed me how it was possible to do much more good with seven or eight hundred pounds, than just to get a miserable five or six per cent. on house-property. I do not wish to dwell on this part of my story, so will only say that I invested my little fortune in the business; and at the end of the first half-year I received a dividend at the rate of twelve per cent. per annum. The second half-year was more successful still, a rather larger dividend being shown; and then, as assistance was required for the fuller development of the business, I gave up my clerkship, to take a more active position in the concern.

I was often surprised—at first almost shocked—at the style of people with whom our new business seemed chiefly to be transacted; they were, with scarcely an exception, vulgar, common people, and more given to drinking and smoking than is customary even in the wine-trade—as I had been used to it. Among them was one young man—he could not have been thirty—who used to come in frequently, and whom I at first disliked greatly; but my partner extolled him as the very impersonation of liberality and honour. His name was Scate, and I understood that he

represented an influential firm in the City. Whether my partner had spoken well of me to Mr Scate, in turn, I did not know, but the latter was always very courteous to me—after his style. I could hardly tell what he came for, but fancied, from occasional hints, that there were money transactions between him and my partner; but the latter always laughed off my inquiries, and said I should soon see what his business was. I certainly had an impression that, little as I liked the appearance of Mr Scate, he really did come on business, which was more than I could believe of many of our visitors, and was partly inclined to credit what my partner said of his extensive transactions.

Well, one day, five weeks after my last dividend was received, I found, on arriving at the office, a letter from my partner, regretting that circumstances altogether unforeseen, and entirely beyond his control, had compelled him to leave for America; he regretted also to say that the stock—which had been mysteriously disappearing of late—could not meet the demands and liabilities, and he advised me to put myself in communication with some experienced solicitor.

As soon as I recovered from the shock of such a letter, I did seek a solicitor; but in one respect I need not have troubled myself, for at least half-a-dozen experienced solicitors put themselves into communication with me, much to my discomfort. The case was such a bad one; so many people had been 'let in'; the trading had been so reckless, and the disposal of all the best goods so suspicious, that serious thoughts were entertained of prosecuting me for fraud; but this was happily abandoned.

I learned how near and great had been my danger, from a clerk who was in the employ of one of the hostile solicitors. He had scraped an acquaintance with me while serving me with writs and all sorts of processes and worrying notices; but he was always cheerful and jocular even over such work as that; and when drinking a glass of port in the deserted counting-house where the wretched business had once been carried on, exhorted me to cheer up also. 'You're all right, mister,' he said one day. [I forget what particular errand he had then come upon, I only remember that it was to serve me with something terribly threatening.] 'You're all right; I can tell you that.'

'I am glad to hear it,' I replied. Probably my tone was somewhat doleful, but I don't see how it could have been anything else.

'Oh, come! pull yourself together, Mr Matley,' said the clerk; 'you've had a narrow squeak, of course; but you're safe now. They won't try it on after all.'

'Try what on?' I naturally asked; for up to this time I had not suspected the existence of any such dangerous consultations as those of which I was so soon about to hear.

'Try what!' echoed the clerk, with a knowing shake of the head. 'Come, that's good, mister; I like to see a man carry it off like that.'

'Carry what?' I asked with some symptoms of annoyance.

The clerk, however, took no notice of my interruption, and proceeded: 'You know they thought they could have you up for conspiracy

and fraud. But old Judahson was your friend—he was. He stuck up for you all through. Says he—for I heard him—"There's no conspiracy there," says he; "the man's nothing better than a fool," he says; "you can all see that. Talk about conspiracy!" he says; "why, I don't believe he'll go out of the concern with enough to buy himself a glass of ale and a sandwich for dinner, when he steps over the door and we put the shutters up. The man hasn't got brains enough to be a rogue."—Well, you see, mister, we all knew, and they all knew, that old Judahson was as good a judge of what a rogue was as any man on the rolls; so naturally he had great influence. So he got you off in style; and I'm glad of it. There was, however, two or three there that didn't know the old man, and they were inclined to be nasty; but there was another party there who spoke up well in your favour. My eye! he did give it to some of 'em.

"Indeed," I said, "And who was he?"

"A friend of yours, I suppose," answered the clerk; "said he knew you well in the business. His name was Bate, or Crate—no! Scate—that was it. I thought he was going to let fly at one fellow. It was a game! But when I see what they have all done, it strikes me you won't have a brass farthing for yourself."

My well-meaning although painfully vulgar friend was right. My creditors left me no farthings, or any other coin; and so total was the collapse, so utterly was I involved, that all the furniture worth speaking of at No. 9 Victoria Louisa Terrace, Kentish Town, was seized. Our home was stripped from top to bottom; bills were stuck all over the windows; auctioneers came, and brokers, and Jews, and shabby hangers-on—of every description, I was going to say; but they were indescribable. Sympathising neighbours came in too; not to buy, but to peep and quiz and titter; for I fear we had been considered stuck-up people, and it was felt that a little reverse was rather good for us than otherwise.

However, the sale took place; went off well. I was assured, for in most cases the goods fetched fully one-fourth of what I had given for them twelve or thirteen months before; and the auctioneer congratulated me. At last, all the hangers-on were gone, and the house was dull and void, save for the few things that were not seized, and for a few other articles which one of Susan's aunts had purchased back for our use. I had no near relatives. Susan's friends were quiet people, occupying a small farm in a Welsh inland county; and we determined not to trouble them; so this aunt, who lived in London on a small annuity, was the only one who knew of our downfall. She, then, was the only friend we expected to find at our sale; but, to our surprise, another one turned up in the person of my former acquaintance and recent champion, Mr Scate. Not only did he appear at the sale, but came up to me, and calling me 'old fellow,' said he was sorry to see such goings-on in my house, that he knew all about the doings which had led to it, and considered I had been scandalously used.

Little as I had liked the man before, I remembered his exertions with my creditors on my

behalf, and was melted by his sympathy now; so warmly shook the hand he extended. 'Now, old boy,' he continued, 'what would you like me to buy in for you? Just say the word, and it's yours, even if I have to kick the whole of these swindlers out of the room to get it.'

I was more staggered than ever at this question, and could hardly get out my answer, that I would not trouble him.

He cut me short here. 'Trouble! nonsense! No trouble at all. I'll get something back from their claws.—There! he is just putting up that marble clock, and hark! that hook-nosed old villain has bid fifteen shillings for it! Why, it must be worth ten times as much.' With this, he began bidding; and his style, I may even say his swagger, was so impressive, that the men allowed him to have the clock for thirty shillings; while I am convinced they would have run it up to treble the money with any other stranger.

So the sale was over; the brokers and all the attendant vampires had gone; the carts, which had been standing about all the afternoon, were gone also; but the marks of muddy feet over all the rooms and on the staircase were not gone, nor were the wisps of dirty straw which lay in every corner and behind every door.

My wife and myself were sitting in what we called our breakfast-room, which looked out on the little sloping front garden with which all the houses in Victoria Louisa Terrace were furnished. Not that we were looking out then; for the gas was lighted, the blinds were down, and we were seated, talking sadly enough, in the room, which seemed so bare and wretched compared with its aspect of a day or two before. I pretended to bear up confidently, for I saw poor Susan's eyes fill with tears when she looked at the naked boards where had been such a comfortable dark carpet; or glanced at the common wooden chairs and table bought back out of our kitchen furniture, and now forced to serve instead of our plain but handsome leather-covered seats. She tried to hide these tears from me, and every time she caught my eye she smiled; but her lip trembled so in the effort, that it was almost worse than the burst of sobbing she was trying so hard to keep back. The solitary item which reminded us of our previous comfort and smartness was the marble clock, which ticked on the mantelpiece; and we had already said two or three times over, how greatly obliged we ought to feel to Mr Scate for his kindness.

I have said I pretended to bear up cheerfully; it was all pretence, for nothing could be more utterly hopeless than were our prospects; and what made us more miserable than we should otherwise have been, was what had previously given us great joy. Susan expected to have a baby in about a couple of months, and what were we to do then? Before that time arrived, it was clear that we must find another residence, for quarter-day would come, and it was hopeless to think of going on where we were. Our present house was large enough to justify us in letting one floor—the card, indeed, with the simple announcement 'Apartments,' still hung idly in our window; but where was the furniture to come from?

'Don't you think, dear,' said my wife, trying to speak without a catch in her voice, 'that we

might buy some plain furniture from people who will take monthly payments, and so'—

I shook my head as she paused, for this was only another danger, a fresh running into debt.

'Perhaps, then, dear,' she resumed, 'some firm might take you as a traveller. I have heard that some persons make a great deal of money in that way.'

I shook my head again. Some persons, no doubt, did well; but I knew better than she did, the long, slow, hopeless task it was for an unknown man to form a new connection. 'The fact is'—I began; when a loud double knock at the street door interrupted me.

My wife turned pale; so did I, as Lizzie, our little servant, ran to the door. Lizzie had begged her mistress not to send her away just yet; for, as she said, she 'had been in a many houses where they was sold up, and so didn't mind it;' and added, that she would rather stay with us for her 'vittles, nor go anywhere else for wages;' so she stayed. When Lizzie had opened the door, we heard some one inquiring for Mr and Mrs Matley. The servant's reply was inaudible; but the voice said: 'Down-stairs, are they? All right; don't you trouble 'em; I'll find them out; they won't mind an old friend intruding.' Then followed a step on the stairs, a tap at our room door, and then the well-known figure and face of Mr Scate became visible.

'Aha! you did not think of seeing me!' he exclaimed.—'No! I thought not; but I got home early, and I couldn't rest without coming round.—Your servant, Mrs Matley. I ought to apologise for intruding like this; but I know you will excuse me. I am a plain man. Everybody knows me; and Ned Scate is here to say that he never heard of such scandalous treatment as your husband has met with, ma'am. That's what I am here for.'

Although the man's voice, air, and manner altogether were terribly vulgar, there was no resisting this; at anyrate Susan could not resist it, and her tears broke out in earnest, and thanking him warmly, she invited him to be seated and stay a while with us.

'It's what I came for, ma'am, if you will excuse my saying so,' replied Mr Scate. 'I came to talk things over with Mr Matley—and of course yourself—and to see if we can't do something to make matters straight. I'm in rather a large way of business myself, and have friends who are very influential. They could make room for a dozen like Mr Matley, and be glad to get such men. Yes, ma'am, glad to get them, for men like Mr Matley are not to be found at the corner of every street. I saw him in business, ma'am; I know what he is capable of, and will take care that others know it too.'

'I am sure I don't know how to thank you for this disinterested kindness,' began my poor wife; 'to strangers too, who'—

'Then don't thank me, ma'am,' bluntly interrupted the other—'don't thank me, at anyrate till I have done something more than talk about my good-will. As for being strangers, ma'am, I don't intend to remain a stranger any longer. This is not a time to stand on a lot of ceremony, and Ned Scate never cared about ceremony. He's a plain John Bull, he is.—And

now, governor'—this was of course to me—'though Mrs Matley probably don't go in for such things, I have taken the liberty of bringing round a single bottle of sherry. If the quality can be beaten in all London, I can only say I have never seen the quality to beat it.'

Suiting the action to the words, he drew from one pocket of his long overcoat, which was white or drab, and made him look like a grazier, a bottle of sherry; and then he produced a knife with a number of blades and odd appurtenances, among others a corkscrew.

All this was utterly opposed to our habits. We cared not for drinking at all, save at our meals; and wine we drank but rarely. We, however, were hesitating, and restrained by a fear of seeming ungrateful to our new friend. He had no sort of hesitation about him; so, while we faltered, he had called Lizzie the servant, who at his command brought two out of the few odd tumblers which were left, with a wine-glass.

'Depend upon it, ma'am,' said he, as he handed the glass to my wife with his politest air, in which—ungrateful as I felt it was to notice it—I could not even at that moment refrain from seeing something of a swagger—'depend upon it that the worst thing you can do is to give way. I am sure if you keep up, your husband will keep up also. Why, ma'am, I have been in fixes twenty times worse than this, twenty times over, and I have got out of them—and here I am! my own master, and caring for nobody.—And now, ma'am!' continued Mr Scate, 'I have much pleasure in drinking your health, with prosperity to you and your worthy husband. Why, in days to come, we shall have many a laugh over these times.—Your very good healths, both!—You must not think, ma'am,' continued our visitor, 'that I have intruded upon you for nothing, or just to say a few unmeaning words; far from it. As I told you before, I have heard all about the shameful way in which Mr Matley has been treated, and I have spoken to some friends already in his behalf. I hope you will not think it was taking too great a liberty.'—My wife assured him that he added to the obligation by doing so.—'And I am pleased to tell you, ma'am,' he went on, 'that there is something more than a chance of an opening. I am not authorised to make an offer to-night, and therefore, looking at the matter purely in a business light, I ought to have said nothing about the affair until I was so authorised. But—if you will excuse my saying so—I was so shocked at seeing these goings-on, that I could not keep silence, and I thought you would be so dispirited at such misfortunes, that you would be glad of even a glimpse of hope.'

'Glad of it!' I said; 'I am more than glad. I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for the interest you have taken'—

Just then came another loud double knock, and, as before, we heard Lizzie open the door, and a short conversation followed; then coming to the breakfast-room door, she said: 'Oh, if you please, mum, it's a gentleman as wants to see the apartments.'

'See the apartments?' we both echoed. 'Oh, he can't. Tell him, Lizzie'—

'No, no!—nonsense! Excuse me for the interruption,' said our new friend; 'but if I were you, I should have him in, and see what he is like; I should indeed. It may come to nothing, of course; but it's a chance, and my maxim in business is, never to throw a chance away.'

MUSICAL FISHES.

WHEN Humboldt was in the South Sea in 1803, about seven o'clock one evening (the 20th of February) an extraordinary noise startled the crew. At first it was like the beating of a number of drums in the distance, and then in the ship itself, especially near the poop. They thought it might be the breakers, and again they fancied the vessel must have sprung a leak. It continued to be heard without intermission for a couple of hours, ceasing entirely about nine o'clock. Humboldt did not conjecture the probable cause of the phenomenon.

Lieutenant White, of the United States navy, in an account of his Voyage to the China Seas, published in 1824, mentions a somewhat similar experience. When at the mouth of a river in Cambodia, he and his crew were astonished by some extraordinary sounds which were heard around the bottom of their vessel. 'The sounds,' he says, 'were like a mixture of the bass of the organ, the sound of bells, the guttural cries of a large frog, and the tones which imagination might attribute to an enormous harp.' The ship seemed almost to tremble with the vibration. 'These noises increased, and finally formed a universal chorus over the entire length of the vessel and the two sides.' They diminished as the ship sailed up the river, and ceased altogether after a time. The interpreter who accompanied Lieutenant White attributed them to a troop of a certain kind of fish, 'which has the faculty of adhering to divers bodies by the mouth.'

The following, by Dr Buist, appeared in the *Bombay Times* of January 1847: 'A party lately crossing from the promontory in Salsette called the "Neat's Tongue," to near Sewree, were, about sunset, struck by hearing long distinct sounds like the protracted booming of a distant bell, the dying cadence of an Æolian harp, the note of a pitch-pipe or pitch-fork, or any other long-drawn-out musical note. It was at first supposed to be music ashore floating at intervals on the breeze; then it was perceived to come from all directions, almost in equal strength, and to arise from the surface of the water all around the vessel. The boatmen at once intimated that the sounds were produced by fish, abounding in the muddy creeks and shoals around Bombay and Salsette; they were perfectly well known, and very often heard. Accordingly, on inclining the ear towards the surface of the water, or, better still, by placing it close to the planks of the vessel, the notes appeared loud and distinct, and followed each other in constant succession. It is supposed

that the fish are confined to particular localities—shallows, estuaries, and muddy creeks, rarely visited by Europeans; and that is the reason why hitherto no mention, so far as we know, has been made of the peculiarity in any work on natural history.'

Two years later, another letter appeared in the same journal stating that 'musical sounds like the prolonged notes on the harp' had been heard to proceed from under water at Vizagapatam.

Sir J. Emerson Tennent having heard a story about musical sounds issuing from the lake at Batticaloa, in Ceylon, paid a visit to the place in 1848. The fishermen told him that the sounds, which resembled the faint sweet notes of an Æolian harp, were heard only at night and during the dry season, were most distinct when the moon was nearest the full, and proceeded, they believed, not from a fish, but from a shell called the 'erying shell.' 'In the evening,' says Tennent, 'when the moon rose, I took a boat, and accompanied the fishermen to the spot. We rowed about two hundred yards north-east of the jetty by the fort gate; there was not a breath of wind, or a ripple except those caused by the dip of our oars. On coming to the point mentioned, I distinctly heard the sounds in question. They came up from the water like the gentle thrills of a musical chord, or the faint vibrations of a wine-glass when its rim is rubbed by a moistened finger. It was not one sustained note, but a multitude of tiny sounds, each clear and distinct in itself; the sweetest treble mingling with the lowest bass. On applying the ear to the woodwork of the boat, the vibration was greatly increased in volume. The sounds varied considerably at different points, as we moved across the lake, as if the number of the animals from which they proceeded was greatest in particular spots; and occasionally we rowed out of hearing of them altogether, until, on returning to the original locality, the sounds were at once renewed. This fact seems to indicate that the causes of the sounds, whatever they may be, are stationary at several points; and this agrees with the statement of the natives, that they are produced by mollusca, and not by fish. They came evidently and sensibly from the depth of the lake; and there was nothing in the surrounding circumstances to support the conjecture that they could be the reverberation of noises made by insects on the shore conveyed along the surface of the water; for they were loudest and most distinct at points where the nature of the land, and the intervention of the fort and its buildings, forbade the possibility of this kind of conduction.'

The next witness is a gentleman signing himself 'Ubique,' who wrote to the *Field* newspaper of October 26, 1867, as follows: 'On embarking on board the *Danube* steamer, lying at anchor in the roadstead of Greytown (Central America), on the 12th May 1867, I was informed that the ship was haunted by most curious noises at night since she had arrived, and that the superstitious black sailors were much frightened at what they thought must be a ghost. The captain and officers could make nothing of it, and it afforded a great matter for discussion. On inquiry, I found that other iron ships had been similarly affected. Curiously enough, this noise was

only heard at night and at certain hours. Some attributed it to fish, suckers, turtle, &c.; others, to the change of tide or current; but no satisfactory conclusion could be arrived at. When night came on, there was no mistake about the noise; it was quite loud enough to awaken me, and could be heard distinctly all over the ship. It was not dissimilar to the high monotone of an Æolian harp; and the noise was evidently caused by the vibration of the plates of the iron hull, which could be sensibly perceived to vibrate. What caused this peculiar vibration? Not the change of current and tide, because, if so, it would be heard by day. Like everything else that we cannot explain, I suppose we must put it down to electricity, magnetism, &c.'

This letter drew forth one from another correspondent, who stated that one moonlight night in 1854, when on board a steamer anchored near the Tavoy river (Tenasserim), he and others 'were struck by an extraordinary noise which appeared to proceed from the shore about a quarter of a mile off, or from the water in that direction. It was something like the sound of a stocking-loom, but shriller, and lasted perhaps five or six seconds, producing a sensible concussion on the ear, like the piercing scream of the cicada; and this gave an impression as if the vessel itself were trembling, or reverberating from the sound. One or two Burmans on board said simply the noise was produced by "fishes;" but of what kind they did not describe. It was repeated two or three times.'

Three years later, in the same locality, a 'droning, drowsy sort of sound' was heard at nightfall by a correspondent of Hardwicke's *Science-Gossip*. It seemed to be above, below, and around. 'The air was all sound, and the sound was all of one kind and pitch.'

We now come to the evidence of Mr Dennehy, given in a letter anent 'Strange Noises heard at Sea off Greytown,' published in *Nature* of May 12, 1870. His statement is the more valuable because he seems to have been unaware of previous observations upon similar 'strange noises' elsewhere. 'I have never heard of its occurring elsewhere, and I have made many inquiries,' he says. The facts recorded are briefly these. The *Wye*, *Tyne*, *Eider*, and *Danube* were iron-built vessels; the *Trent*, *Thames*, *Tamar*, and *Solent* were coppered-wooden vessels, which all, at one time or another, anchored off Greytown. The former were haunted by the strange sounds; the latter knew nought of them. They were heard at the Greytown anchorage only. Punctually about midnight the concert began, awakening nearly the whole crew, and it invariably continued for the same period—namely, two hours. The sound is described as 'musical, metallic, with a certain cadence, and a one-two-three time tendency of beat. It is heard most distinctly over open hatchways, over the engine-room, through the coal-shoots, and close round the outside of the ship. It cannot be fixed at any one place, always appearing to recede from the observer. On applying the ear to the side of an open bunker, one fancies that it is proceeding from the very bottom of the hold. Very different were the comparisons made by the different listeners. The blowing of a conch-shell by fishermen at a distance, a shell held to the ear, an Æolian harp, the whir or buzzing

sound of wheel-machinery in rapid motion, the vibration of a large bell when the first and louder part of the sound has ceased, the echo of chimes in the belfry, the ricocheting of a stone on ice, the wind blowing over telegraph wires—have all been assigned as bearing a more or less close resemblance. It is louder on the second than the first, and reaches its acme on the third night. Calm weather and smooth water favour its development. The rippling of the water alongside, and the breaking of the surf on the shore, are heard quite distinct from it.' The English sailors attributed the phenomenon to what they called the trumpet-fish—a fish of their own invention, for the real trumpet-fish (*Centriscus scolopax*), so called from the shape of its jaws, does not exist in those waters.

In all the cases yet adduced, the observers, it will be noticed, were on board ships or boats of some kind. Canon Kingsley, however, relates that he more than once heard the noise from the shore, in the island of Monos, in the Northern Bocas of Trinidad. 'I heard it first about midnight, and then again in the morning about sunrise. In both cases the sea was calm. It was not to be explained by wind, surf, or caves. I likened it to a locomotive in the distance rattling as it blows off its steam. The natives told me that the noise was made by a fish.' He tells us that it is frequently heard at the Bocas, and at Point à Pierre, some twenty-five miles south; also outside the Gulf along the Spanish Main.

Finally, while the phenomenon is most commonly met with in tropical seas, it is not unknown in the temperate zone. Mr. Lauder Lindsay heard it in 1869 while on board a steamer anchored in the Tagus, off Lisbon. The ship's officers told him that it was produced by a fish, and was only heard at certain states of the tide.

More instances might be brought forward, but we think we have quoted enough. Let us now endeavour to generalise our facts as well as we can.

First, as to the geographical distribution of the phenomenon, we find that it has a most surprising range. In the Western hemisphere it has been heard at the mouth of the Pascagoula, in the state of Mississippi; at the mouth of the Bayou Coq del Inde, on the north shore of the Gulf of Mexico; at Greytown; at Trinidad; at Caldera, in Chili; and at several places on the Pacific coast of South America. It is thus known at wide intervals along the entire coast of tropical America. In our own half of the world we find it occurring on the coast of China; at Tavoy, in British Burmah; at Vizagapatam, on the east coast of the Indian peninsula; at Salsette, on the west coast, and at the Chilka Lake, on the east coast, of Ceylon; near Colombo, on the west of the island; in the Bay of Naples, in the Mediterranean; and at Lisbon, on the Atlantic coast of Europe. Whatever the source of the sounds, then, it must be of general distribution throughout the tropical regions of the globe.

Next, as to time—it is noticeable that the sounds are invariably heard at night; sometimes about sunset, never before it. The two-hours' period noticed by Mr Dennehy is also mentioned

by Humboldt. Some observers describe the noise as continuous; others, as intermittent.

Although in the Greytown instances iron ships only were affected, we have abundant cases of the phenomenon being observed by those in wooden vessels. The materials of the ship, and for that matter the ship itself, would seem to have nothing to do with the production of the sound. Of course, the ship's frame may act, as any hollow body would, as a sounding-board, and thus give greater strength and amplitude to the aerial vibrations.

In most cases, the phenomenon occurs in salt or brackish water. But it has been known to occur in fresh water. So we can argue nothing from the nature of the water.

Lastly—and this is the only generalisation that we can fairly draw from the observations yet recorded—the sound is usually heard at or near the mouths of rivers.

It was perhaps this sweet and pleasing sound that gave rise to the myths of mermaids and sirens. The mariners of old, who never ventured beyond their own coasts, would be quite as likely to hear it as we are; for there is no instance on record of the music being heard at sea; and with their usual facility in inventing a pretty and poetical cause for everything, they would soon find authors for the dulcet tones in nondescript beings dwelling in submarine caves and grottoes. The fishermen and sailors of our own day almost universally ascribe the sounds to fish. At Lisbon it is the 'corvina,' whatever that may be; at Baltimore it is the 'cat-fish'; in the West Indies it is the 'trumpet-fish'; in Ecuador it is the 'siren' or 'musico'; at Naples it is the 'maigre' or 'drum-fish'; in Ceylon it is not a fish at all, but the 'crying shell,' and so on.

The exact evidence at hand from the domain of natural history respecting the sounds emitted by fishes, does not perhaps fully satisfy the cravings of the student of natural history, for the reason that such evidence is both difficult to obtain, and, as the foregoing remarks have shown, also presents puzzling points for determination in the matter of the causes of the sounds. Dr. Dufosse, who has made the production of sound by fishes a special study, says that whilst many fishes produce sounds, there is great variety in the manner in which the noises are evolved. Thus the movements or friction of the pharyngeal bones, and the vibration of the muscles of the swimming-bladder, which acts as a sounding-board, are two common methods of sound-production in fishes. We know that one of the Gurnards (*Trigla*) produces loud sounds, ranging, as Mr Darwin remarks, nearly over an octave, by means of the intrinsic muscles of the swimming-bladder. More curious, however, is the case of fishes belonging to the genus *Ophidium*. Here, the male fishes alone are provided with a drumming-apparatus, consisting of bones and muscles developed in relation to the swimming-bladder. In the *Umbrinas* ('Corvo' of the Italians, 'Umbrine' or 'Ombre' of the French), the drumming sounds are produced apparently also through the medium of the swimming-bladder. These fishes have been heard at a depth of twenty fathoms. The Rochelle fishermen say that the noise is produced by the males alone. They also allege that these fishes

can be taken by imitating the noise, especially during the spawning season. Even with all this, however, much remains to be explained regarding these curious submarine sounds heard in various localities and at various times.

SAVED BY BULLOCKS.

A SOUTH-AFRICAN EXPERIENCE.

THE incident here narrated took place while the author was residing on the farm of a hospitable Dutchman, who for some years had conducted a good, safe, and profitable business in Cape-Town. But as being cooped up all day in a dusty office was not in accordance with his views of freedom, he left it, to turn his hand to the more simple, if not more profitable career of a farmer, in which he could indulge his love of freedom.

The way in which I became acquainted with Pietermann was this. For some months I had been down with fever, contracted under the combined effects of exposure to a tropical sun, and the irregular mode of life which I had for some time been accustomed to. As soon as the doctor pronounced me strong enough to walk, he gave me marching orders to remove to a more congenial district. So away I went to a village some hundred and fifty miles distant, where the fresh air and strength of body which I so urgently required were to be had. On arriving at the village, I put up at the only hotel in the place, and it was here I made the acquaintance of Mynheer the Dutchman. One evening, while sitting outside under the veranda of the hotel, Pietermann drove up to have his 'liquor,' and attracted no doubt by my thin, pale, worn-out looks, asked me how I was in health. We soon fell into an affable chat, as I found him a man of very interesting experiences. Dutchmen are a kind, good-natured, and polite people, ready at any time to give a helping hand to any worn-out and dejected foreigner. In the course of half an hour, therefore, I gradually unfolded to him my plans; and immediately, with that hospitality so general to the South African Boer, he invited me down to his farm, distant some thirteen miles. I hesitated, but told him I would give him my answer in a couple of days. The time came, and I decided to accept his offer with many thanks. He having come up to the village with produce, I saw him, and gave him my answer; and in the afternoon, we commenced our journey to the farm.

When we were fairly en route, I began, with an Englishman's inquisitiveness, to ask about sport. 'What game is there to be had on the farm?'

'Ah!' said he, turning round with a merry twinkle in his eye. 'Sport; well, no doubt I shall be able to find enough for you.'

I inwardly rejoiced at this; but my joy was suddenly cut short.

'O yes; there are any amount of rats, and I shall be glad if you would clear them out.'

Rats! Was I going to a Dutchman's farm to shoot rats? 'But surely,' said I, 'you have something worthy of the name of game?'

'Yes; no doubt we have,' he replied; and after bantering me a little, he said I should be able to gratify my desire for sport. 'There are jackals in the mountain, springboks on the flats, bush-

bucks in the bush, and perhaps a stray tiger or two [the Cape leopard]. Besides these, you will have plenty of birds to go at.

So I found that, after all, I should not be so badly off as at first appeared.

By this time we had reached the farm, where we were welcomed by the wife and a whole troop of daughters. Before I had been there many days, I was wearied of the daily routine of the house, which was extremely monotonous; and I welcomed the day when I should be strong enough to take my rifle and saunter away in search of game.

One morning, however, my host informed me that he had all but bought three hundred sheep, and intended the next day to go and complete the purchase at a farm about thirty miles away. He asked me to accompany him; which I readily promised to do, as I knew that I should be able to get a glimpse of Nature in her loveliest garb, and perhaps a stray shot or two at some animal. All that day, we were preparing for the proposed journey; for we had various mysterious articles, which were indispensable on such an expedition, to take with us.

Next morning at four o'clock, I was roused by a friendly shake, and told to dress as quickly as possible. I made a hasty toilet, and hurried out to the *stoep*—a raised platform in front of the house—and took my seat in the cart, in which were inspanned or harnessed two horses. These carts are something similar to our own, but very much lighter, and made without springs, hence one can imagine the terrible jolting a person receives when riding in such a vehicle, without cushions, over hard stony ground, at full gallop, for a Dutchman never thinks of letting his horse walk. For discomfort, let me have the genuine Cape cart.

After innumerable hand-shakes and 'qua-morrows'—for this constitutes a never-failing portion of the proceedings when going away, be it but for a few hours—we started off, and before breakfast-time were halfway towards our destination. After staying a short time at a village on the way, we reached the place where Pietermann had purchased the sheep, nothing of any consequence happening beyond our seeing a few monkeys and an eagle, the latter, however, beyond range. Before we had been at the farm ten minutes, all was bustle; the sheep had to be counted, then caught, marked with the monogram of the buyer—no easy work under a sun which marked pretty near ninety-five degrees in the shade. However, this, by the help of a dozen Hottentots, was done, and after partaking of refreshment, we, about four P.M., turned our horses homeward. With the object of showing me some wonders of which my host had spoken in the morning, we agreed to return home by a nearer though more dangerous route.

About six P.M. we reached a small hamlet, and here we must outspan. As is usual in every village, there was an hotel, and this we entered. Up to this time, I had thought Pietermann was a moderate drinker, but very soon I was undeceived. Glass after glass of Cape *smoke* or brandy did he toss down his throat, till he soon became very much affected by it. It was now close upon eight o'clock, and we had a dangerous route to traverse ere we reached home, and there was every appear-

ance of a storm. When, therefore, he insisted on starting for home, I tried to persuade him to remain all night. But, no; the more I pressed, the more determined he was to proceed. After several fruitless efforts, we inspanned the horses and brought them round to the hotel door. The landlord—an Englishman—came to me and said: 'I don't like the idea of your going home with Pietermann round the "Nek." Will you stay all night?' 'No,' I said. 'If Pietermann will persist in going, I will go with him.'

He returned me no answer till I was seated in the cart; then he whispered and said I should have to be very careful, as there were several places which were exceedingly dangerous, but one especially, called 'Slagters Nek,' so named on account of a dreadful slaughter of troops by natives, years before. For two hundred yards, I was told, this road runs parallel with a precipice, then there is a sharp bend, at which I would have to be careful, or we might go over. 'But keep the horses well in hand,' said my adviser, 'and you will be all right.'

Pleasant advice to one who had never travelled the road before, and with two strong vicious animals, and an inexperienced driver like myself. But I put a bold face upon matters, and said I should get through all right. The horses were, strange to say, extraordinarily fisky. Whether it was that they had had too much corn and too little work, or that they knew they had a strange driver, I do not know; but true it was, they were like two horses which had never been in harness before. Into the cart tumbled the Dutchman, with the help of the bystanders, and off we started like a whirlwind, with a caution from all present.

Many had been the comments upon the Englishman bold enough to drive old Pietermann's horses; and from what I could gather from their conversation—carried on in Dutch, yet partly understood by me—none of them much envied me the drive through B—Kloop and round the 'Nek.' But on we went till the entrance of the 'Poort' was gained. Here nature had been very busy, making it a complete network of fortresses, and had so hemmed in the inhabitants, that it was no light task to get out. In seeking to reach the other side of the mountains, instead of going in a straight line, they were compelled to go along the base of one hill, then round a bend, back again, and so for miles ere they reached their destination. For three miles through the 'Poort,' it was comparatively easy to travel; but the remaining ten was a regular series of chasms, boulders, and river-beds, making it unsafe for one unacquainted with the road to travel. In some places you would have a plateau to cross; at another, as if to vary the monotony, there would be a huge yawning chasm to pass; and, to crown all, a road at the utmost extent sixteen feet wide.

In passing these chasms, travellers had to be very careful, or an unlucky move would precipitate them over the brink. Every few yards, there were huge rocks, some of which had been dislodged from the mountain side by the rain, and thence rolled into the road. Those in the river-beds had been brought down by the fearful velocity of a tropical storm; and these are rarely, if ever removed, as the Dutchman thinks it too much labour, though he may pass and repass a

dozen times a week. These stones present very serious obstacles to the passage of any light vehicle. About half-way through this 'Poort' was the dreaded 'Slagters Nek'; and in turning the sharp bend, care had to be exercised to avoid finding a lodgment in the chasm, which was three hundred feet in sheer descent below.

We had now reached the entrance of the 'Poort,' and were trotting leisurely along, the horses having calmed down somewhat. I had thus far managed to avoid serious contact with rocks and boulders, and as I journeyed over the first three miles, with the moon shining brightly, for the storm had passed away, I felt more light-spirited than I did at the outset. The stupid Dutchman in the cart with me was now sound asleep. No jolting had awakened him, so securely was he wrapped in slumber. But the beauty of the scene made me forget all this. On each side were to be seen the silent mountains; before me, far away, was a flowing stream, glistening white in the moonlight; while now and then might be heard the sharp bark of the jackal or the sudden chatter of birds. I was now about a mile from the 'Nek,' and I drew up the horses that I might drink in the scene more vividly. Standing up in the cart, I gazed around me, in order to fill myself, as it were, with the beauty and grandeur of the scene, when I was suddenly startled by a loud growl, quickly followed by a second, louder still. It was a Cape leopard. I felt my hair rise. To seize my rifle and discharge it was my first thought; but it was underneath my friend at the bottom of the cart. Ere I had time to seize it, I was jerked into my seat. The horses were galloping, wild with fear and excitement, straight for the 'Nek.' I seized hold of the reins, which had been dragged from my grasp, and pulled with all the energy of a man in despair. But I might as well have sat still; for all my pulling was without effect. On they dashed over rocks and boulders, impelled by their wild fear; while I was expecting every moment to be hurled into the chasm below. I made another effort; but it was equally fruitless. I was in imminent danger of being jerked off my seat, and had now to use all my strength to keep my hold of the cart. Still on they rushed, and no help for it. I grew deathly calm, waiting for the doom which seemed so near. We tore on at racehorse speed, nearer, nearer. Now the dark wall of the 'Nek' was distinctly to be seen looming before us.

'Help!' I shouted, more in agony than with the idea of any one hearing me; yet one heard, though I knew it not. 'Help!' again I cried.

I dare not think of it. On, on! I closed my eyes. There was a sudden jerk; I felt myself pitched headlong out of the cart, and—I knew no more.

Saved! But how? On the opposite side of the 'Nek,' was toiling up the rather steep ascent, a Dutchman with his bullocks and wagon, returning from a far-off village, where he had been to sell his produce; and as he lay half asleep, he was suddenly aroused by the cry of 'Help!' At once the thought flashed through his mind that some one was in danger at the 'Nek.' He was but a few hundred yards away, so the usually unwieldy, slow, and phlegmatic Dutchman jumped from the wagon, seized the whip, and

commenced belabouring the poor oxen till they started on a run, passed the bend, when he at once saw my peril. No time was to be lost, so he drew up the oxen across the path, and was in time to receive the full force of the collision.

Yes; I was safe. Could I believe it? I had been for a few minutes unconscious; but the kindly Dutchman's flask had revived me, and here I was. My first thought was for my companion; and, strange to say, there he was still lying at the bottom of the cart, quite unconscious of the risks he had run. The horses were not, beyond a few scratches and bruises, any the worse for their race.

After this, we journeyed slowly home, for the horses were now thoroughly cowed; and when we reached the farm, we were received with open arms, as the family were frantic with fear, knowing not what had become of us. When I related how narrow had been our escape, there were abundant expressions of gratitude. I have travelled since then in various parts of the world, and have gone through perils by land and sea, but never shall I forget my terrible ride with Pietermann and our being saved by bullocks.

SONGLESS.

SWEET little maid, whose golden-rippled head
Between me and my grief its beauty rears,
With quick demand for song—all singing's dead;
My heart is sad; mine eyes are dimmed with tears.

Oh, ask me not for songs! I cannot sing;
My ill-tuned notes would do sweet music wrong;
I have no smile to greet the laughing spring,
No voice to join in summer's tide of song.

More from October's dying glory takes
My heart its hymn; and fuller sympathy
Finds with the Autumn hurricane that makes
The forest one convulsive agony.

Or, when the last brown leaves in Winter fall,
While all the world in grim frost-fetters lies,
I envy them the snowflake's gentle fall,
That hides their sorrows from the frowning skies.

Methinks it would be sweet like thorn to rest—
O'er Life's mad scene to pull the curtain down;
Rest, where no weary dream will pierce the breast,
Of perished love or unfulfilled renown:

No weariness of patient work uncrowned
By its reward; no early hopes destroyed;
No vain desires, nor thing desired and found
Void of enjoyment when at last enjoyed.

Perchance when mist of intervening years
Softens the Past—as oft at close of day
The far grim range all beautiful appears,
Kissed into brightness by the sunset ray—

When the sharp pang of bitter memories born,
Has lost its sting, and this my present pain
Shows like some ill dream in the light of morn,
I'll sing thee o'er the olden songs again.

R. W. BOND.

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BRAIN-POWER.

We are supposed to live in an age when brute-force has ceased to rule, and when brain-power alone is the governing agent. In the good old days, the heavy, strong-armed knight, protected by his impenetrable armour, and skilled in the use of his sword, was almost invincible. A little nearer our own day, the skilled swordsman or dead-shot whose ultimatum was the duel, ruled to a certain extent the society in which he moved. To test which was the most powerful knight, was an easy matter; for a combat between the rivals was easily arranged, and the result was seldom questionable; or if it were uncertain, the relative powers were supposed to be equal.

In the present day, however, the question of brain-power is a far more difficult problem. We cannot weigh brains as we can tea or sugar; we cannot determine their mental capacity as we could the physical powers of knights of old, by setting two of them opposite each other and leaving them to fight it out. We have, however, arranged various tests which we suppose give us a correct estimate of the brain-power of various individuals. These tests may be better than none at all; yet they are far from being perfect; consequently, we too often by such means select men to do work for which they are quite unsuited, and to fill offices for which they have no capacity.

The present is an age of competitive examinations, yet these afford but an imperfect test of brain-power; for after a time, competitive examinations become less and less efficient as true tests of intelligence, and sink into a sort of official routine. As examples, we will take the following cases. Brown is the son of an Indian officer who died when his boy was ten years old, and left his widow badly off. Young Brown is intended for the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich; but his mother's means do not enable her to send him to a first-class 'crammer's,' so he has to sit beneath the average schoolmaster. He works hard and thinks a great deal, and gains a fair

knowledge of the subjects he is required to learn. He goes up to the competitive examination at Woolwich, and finds each question so complicated, that he is utterly puzzled; and when the results of the examination are made known, Brown is nearly last on the list.

On the other hand, Smith is the son of a wealthy tradesman who wishes his son to enter as a cadet at Woolwich. Young Smith is sent early in life to a successful 'crammer's,' to be fattened with knowledge as turkeys are crammed for Christmas. The crammer does not confine his attention to teaching his pupils; but he watches the examination papers set at Woolwich, and he finds that the examiners have each a peculiar 'fad,' and set their questions in a sort of rotation. He looks carefully over these, and he forms a kind of estimate of the questions which are likely to be set at any particular examination. He therefore trains his pupils for these questions, and is often so successful in his predictions, that at least half the questions have been worked out by these pupils a week before the examination; and this result is obtained without any collusion between the crammer and the examiner. On one occasion that we know of, seven questions out of a paper of thirteen were predicted as 'due;' and the pupils consequently of this crammer were most successful at this 'competitive.' Young Smith is thus trained, and passes say fifth out of a long list, and is considered, as far as this test is concerned, to possess brain-power far beyond that of the unfortunate Brown, who was nearly last in this same examination.

Twenty years elapse, and Smith and Brown meet. Smith has jogged on in the usual routine; he may have never either said or done a foolish thing. Brown, on the other hand, is a man of wide reputation, has written clever books, and done many clever things; yet people who know his early history say how strange it was that he was so stupid when he was young, for he was ignominiously 'spun' at Woolwich!

Those who thus speak, imagine that the

examination at which Smith succeeded, and Brown failed, was a test of their brain-power. It was in reality nothing of the kind; it was merely a test of the relative experience of those who trained Smith and Brown.

Even thus far it will be evident that our present supposed tests are not infallible; but we will go even further, and will examine the actual work itself which is supposed to be the great test of mental capacity, and we can divide this work into two classes—namely, acquired knowledge, and the power to reason. In nearly every case, the training which enables a youth to pass a competitive examination belongs to the first class—acquired knowledge. It consists of a knowledge of mathematical rules and formulæ, classics, modern languages, history, and geography. Mathematics, if properly taught, and especially geometry, tends to strengthen the mind and fit it to reason; but it too often happens that a youth is crammed with mathematics for a particular examination, and he has not mentally digested what he has thus been crammed with; and consequently, instead of his mind having been strengthened by this process, it has in reality become weakened; and ten or fifteen years after the examination, the man—then in his maturity—derives no advantage from his formerly acquired knowledge, because he has forgotten it. He merely suffers from the mental repetition of his younger days, and dislikes mathematics; just as a pastry-cook's boy is said to abhor tarts and buns, because he was crammed with them when he first was placed among such temptations.

A knowledge of modern languages is useful to those who travel, or who wish to become acquainted with the literature of other countries; but as a test of brain-power, the acquisition of any language fails. There is no language in use which is based on anything but arbitrary rules; reason has no influence on languages. The selection in French, for example, of masculines and feminines is most unreasonable. Why should a chair in French be given petticoats, and a stool placed in breeches? Why should the sun be considered masculine, and the moon feminine? In German, the same arbitrary rules exist—the masculines, feminines, and neuters have no reason to guide them. Take a child of five years old, and a clever man of twenty-five—let each use only the same exertion to acquire a knowledge of any spoken language, and the child will easily excel the man. This is because ear, and the memory derived from ear, are the means by which languages are acquired. Reason enables us to predict what is probable, when we know that which has previously occurred. If, then, we informed a reasoning individual that a chair, an article made of wood, with four legs, was feminine in French, and then called his attention to a stool, an article made of wood, with four legs, and inquired to what gender he considered the stool belonged, he would naturally conclude that it also was feminine; but a stool (*tabouret*) is masculine in French.

Then, again, the pronunciation of words is purely arbitrary. Take our own language, for example, and such words as plough, enough, cough, dough, bough, rough, &c. Where does reason enter into the pronunciation of such words?

What power of intellect would enable us to pronounce 'cough' correctly, even though we knew how 'bough' was spoken? Yet, in spite of these unreasonable laws, classics and modern languages are not unusually referred to, not as stored knowledge, but as tests of mental power. As a rule, it is not the reasoner, or person gifted with great brain-power, who the most quickly learns a language, but the superficial thinker, gifted with ear; and these superficial people are the first to quiz any error made, when a speaker attempts to converse in a foreign language.

We may fairly divide the subjects employed in modern mental training into those which store, and those which strengthen the mind. Languages; a knowledge of history and geography; the facts connected with various sciences, such as chemistry, electricity, astronomy, &c., are stores; but not one of these does more than store the mind. Men's minds were stored with a certain number of astronomical facts when Galileo attempted to revive the olden belief that the earth rotated; but their minds had not been strengthened, as it was the leading astronomers who most offered opposition to him. Several men with stored minds were the great opponents of Stephenson when he talked about travelling twenty miles an hour on a railroad. So that it appears that no matter how well a mind may be stored, if it is incapable of judging correctly on a novelty, it cannot be called a strong mind.

Our competitive examinations tend almost entirely to bring to the front those whose minds are the best stored, and many persons therefore have come to the conclusion that by such a course we have obtained for our various services what are termed 'the cleverest youths.' It does not, however, follow that this result has been obtained. The greatest brain-power may actually be low down in the list of a competitive examination in which stored knowledge alone has been requisite. There is a certain advantage to be gained by storing the mind with facts, and some people imagine that a knowledge of these facts indicates an educated and strong mind. It, however, merely proves that the mind has been stored; it does not prove it to have been strengthened. We may know what Caesar did under certain conditions; how Alfred the Great organised his police so that he could hang bracelets of value on signposts without fearing that highwaymen would steal them; and a multitude of other similar facts may have been stored in our minds; but any quantity of such stores would not enable an individual to solve the present Irish difficulty, unless he could find in the past an exactly similar case which had been treated successfully by some particular system.

It is even now considered that by making a boy pass through a long course of mathematics or classics, and then testing his acquired knowledge by an examination, we adopt the best method of obtaining the greatest brain-power. We may derive an advantage, supposing mathematics or classics are requisite in the future career of the boy; but as a test of brain-power and perseverance, we would much sooner select the boy who could the most rapidly and most certainly solve a three-move chess problem. And if mathematics are not required in the future career of a boy, it would be equally as unreasonable to

devote three years to the solution of chess problems, as it is to devote a like period to the solution of the higher branches of mathematics. In both instances, the mental exercise is supposed to be for the purpose of strengthening the mind, and the chess problems are certainly as efficient as the mathematical. It is not unusual to find a profound mathematician who is particularly dull in all other subjects, and who fails to comprehend any simple truth which cannot be presented to him in a mathematical form; and as there are a multitude of truths which cannot be treated mathematically, a mere mathematician has but a limited orbit.

A chess-player, again, or a solver of chess problems, has always to deal with pieces of a constant value; thus, the knight, bishop, pawn, &c., are of constant values, so that his combinations are not so very varied. A whist-player, however, has in each hand not only cards which vary in value according to what is trump, but during the play of the hand, the cards themselves vary in value; thus, a ten may, after one round of a suit, become the best card in that suit. Brain-power independent of stored knowledge is therefore more called into action by a game of whist than it is by mathematics, chess, or classics; consequently, whilst mathematicians and classical scholars may be found in multitudes, a really first-class whist-player is a rarity; and if we required an accurate test of relative brain-power, we should be far more likely to obtain correct results by an examination in whist, than we should by an examination in mathematics. In the latter, cramming might supply the place of intelligence; in the former, no amount of cramming could guard against one-tenth of the conditions. A first-rate mathematician may on other subjects be stupid; a first-class whist-player is rarely if ever stupid on original matters requiring judgment.

A very large amount of the elements of success consists in the advantages with which an individual may start in life, and over which he himself may have no control. The case of Smith and Brown already referred to may serve to illustrate this fact. When conclusions are arrived at relative to hereditary genius, these advantages may be considered. The son of a judge becomes a judge, and we may claim hereditary genius as the cause. We should, however, be scarcely justified in assuming hereditary genius because the son of a general officer became this general's aide-de-camp. A general officer with five thousand efficient troops gains a complete victory over fifteen thousand indifferently armed savages, and he is looked upon as a hero. Another general with a like number of men is defeated by an army of ten thousand well-armed but unsoldier-like-looking men, and he is regarded as a failure; and yet of the two, the defeated army may have possessed the better general. In order, therefore, to judge of the relative powers of two individuals, we must take into consideration all the advantages or difficulties with which each starts in life, or in any undertaking. The relative success is by no means the only criterion from which to judge of capacity, any more than it would be correct to judge of the capacity of two whist-players, when one held four by honours and six trumps,

and his adversary held a necessarily poor hand.

In the great battle of life, these conditions are perpetually interfering with the results to be derived from the relative value of brain-power, and are so numerous as to have an extensive influence. For example, a man possessing great brain-power has succeeded in attaining an official position of eminence. He selects a nephew or particular friend to be his assistant. We have competed with this assistant in various things, and there is no doubt as to his inferiority. Time goes on, and this assistant succeeds to the post of his relative merely from what may be called departmental claims, and he is *ex officio* supposed to be possessed of the talents and knowledge which appertain to his post. Our opinion, if opposed to that of the official, will by the superficial outsiders be considered valueless; yet ours may be correct, and that of our opponent erroneous. It is by such means that very feeble men often occupy official scientific positions to which they are by no means entitled in consequence of their intelligence.

When such an event occurs, an immense amount of damage is done to the cause of truth and real science, because the individual thus raised by personal interest to the position of a scientific judge or referee, too often fails to judge of a question on its merits, and condemns it if it be not in accordance with routine. A question thus disposed of, is very difficult to again bring into notice without prejudice. There is no doubt that even among the so-called educated people, the majority possess only stored minds, and are incapable, consequently, of reasoning on any problem, other than by bringing to bear on it their stock of knowledge, which probably, granting the problem is original, will not apply. No educated person doubts that the earth is a sphere; but few of these can prove that it is so by means of facts with which they are acquainted, though a simple law of geometry is able to prove the fact.

The average occupations of young men require nothing more than stored minds and powers of observation; consequently, our competitive examinations serve to some extent to bring to the front such qualifications. But it is not among such that we obtain our discoverers, inventors, great statesmen, or good generals. The mere routine man will almost invariably bring about a disaster when he has novel conditions to deal with; and as a rule, the routine youth comes out best at an examination.

At the present time, we have apparently no accurate test by which to measure the relative brain-power of individuals. Competitive examinations cannot do so, for the reasons that we have stated. Success in life is, again, dependent on so many influences quite outside of the individual, that this success is no test. The accumulation of money—that is, 'getting rich'—is too often but the results of selfishness and cruel bargains, and cannot be invariably accepted as a proof of brain-power.

Considering these facts, therefore, it appears that just as intellect is invisible, so the relative power of intellect is unmeasurable; and instead of forming hasty conclusions as to the relative powers of two men, from the results of examina-

tions, we may perceive that by such means we may be selecting those only who, under certain conditions, have succeeded in storing their minds with the facts required for that examination.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XL.—‘GERARD,’ HIS MOTHER HAD SAID, LOOKING WITH AN AWFUL FOREBODING FEAR AT HIS FACE, ‘YOU WILL BEAR IT FOR YOUR FATHER’S SAKE. THERE ARE THINGS WORTH LIVING FOR YET.’

AND so in the race of love Val Strange won, and Gerard Lumby lost. After the one great outburst of grief, Gerard took things quietly, so very quietly, that those who knew him thought it dangerous. The wedding-party at Lumby Hall broke, as may be easily imagined, into most admired disorder, and took its devious way homeward in much astonishment, indignation, and sympathy.

From the time of her first coming to the county, Constance had been unable to secure the favourable verdict of the feminine population. It would be perhaps too cheap a satire to say that she outshone them all, and to find in that the sole reason for her unpopularity. She was not prouder than other women; but somehow she looked proud, and her beautiful face and figure wore a seeming of haughtiness which was quite an accident of aspect, and had nothing to do with her nature. The ladies, then, went away with a very dreadful impression of her. The graver scandals her elopement might have caused were set at rest by the arrival of a message from her husband. Val had started with a special license in his pocket, and they had been married the day after their flight; not at Swansea, but at a little village on the coast where he had a friend who was a clergyman. Five hundred pounds seems an absurdly large sum to have offered as a bribe to Constance’s maid; but the fact was that Constance had flatly refused to move without her, and Mary’s obstinacy had driven Val almost to his wits’ end. And he was so eager, that, to secure his purpose, ten times the sum would have seemed nothing to him. He gave little Mary the cheque after the wedding; but she did not know what to do with it, and was so miserable and frightened when she thought of facing Hiram, that Constance kept her, and they sailed away together, first to Ireland, and afterwards to the Mediterranean. Val, in a letter to Mr Jolly, proposed to make settlements so liberal upon his wife, that the old gentleman, when the first shock was over, began to regard the matter even complacently. The girl had got married any way, though it had scarcely been done becomingly. And she had married the wealthiest man in the county after all; and what was done being done, Mr Jolly felt it better to say no more about it, but to take the good provided, to ignore the discomforts attendant upon it, and be thankful. But being a man who in all things consulted the dignities and decencies of life, he feigned at first to be stricken quite through and through with grief, and sold the lately-purchased Grange. It was given out that he was quite heart-broken; but he made

a reasonable profit on the transaction, and was back in Paris in a fortnight from the date of his daughter’s flight, strolling gaily along the asphalt, and enjoying himself hugely as a widower at large.

Mrs Lumby had at first dreaded the shock this new disaster would probably bring to her husband’s weakened mind. But he, reading Gerard’s quietude wrongly, was less perturbed than she had feared, and indeed accepted the evil with an equanimity of resignation which would have been impossible to him in the days of mental and physical health. Even Gerard’s heart was a little comforted in a little while by the failure of the blow to wound his father. For himself, he bore the blow with amazing fortitude; but those who knew most of him liked his quiet least. To his father and mother and to Milly, and even to the servants, he was gentle and quiet, but there was a resolved sternness in his manner, beneath its gentleness, which was new and alarming. But there was only one who had real warrant for knowing what the quiet of his demeanour covered. This was Hiram.

The terrible night of Hiram’s disclosure Gerard passed alone.

‘Gerard,’ his mother had said, looking with an awful foreboding fear at his face, ‘you will bear it for your father’s sake. There are things worth living for yet.’

‘Yes,’ he answered; ‘there are things worth living for.’ But the foreboding haunted his mother’s heart all night, and she lay praying and trembling, and scarcely dared to own her fear even to herself. There are terrors to which even in the recesses of our own hearts we dare scarce give form, and this was one of them. In the morning, when Hiram’s story, which had never seemed to need any confirmation, was confirmed, Gerard rang his bell, and summoned last night’s messenger to his dressing-room.

‘What set you upon the scent?’ he asked. ‘Or did you find it out by accident?’ His face was gray and hard, like stone, and Hiram had scarcely the heart to answer him.

‘The first thing was,’ he responded after a pause, ‘a portrait I saw in his portmanteau the day he came here.’

‘A portrait?’ said Gerard. ‘Whose portrait?’

‘Miss Jolly’s,’ said Hiram, fearing to pronounce the name, but being compelled to answer.

‘I suppose,’ said Gerard, ‘that the portmanteau is still here?’

‘I believe it is,’ said Hiram.

‘Let me see it,’ said Gerard, rising. ‘Is the portrait still there?’—Hiram could not say.—‘Let us see,’ his master said; and turning to the door, led the way to the room Val Strange had occupied. ‘Open it!’—glancing at the portmanteau. Hiram obeyed, and tumbled the things over. The portrait was gone, but the envelope was there still, and Hiram held it up.

‘It was in this,’ he said.

Gerard took it from his outstretched hand, and turned it over, and read the inscription—‘Thy grace being gained, cures all disgrace in me.’ A short hard laugh escaped him, and he folded the envelope with great care and put it in his pocket-book. But half-a-dozen times in the course of the day, Hiram saw him looking at it with an expression which betokened no

good for the writer of the line. 'Go on,' he said coldly, when he had put back his pocket-book with the envelope in it. Hiram told the story as we know it.

'Is there a gentleman in your case too?' asked Gerard. 'Are we in the same boat, Search?'

'I don't like his way of takin' it at all,' said Hiram to himself, returning no audible answer to that cynical inquiry. 'It looks mischeevous.'

'If there should prove to be a gentleman in your case, what shall you do, Search?' asked Gerard.

Hiram liked his tone and manner less than ever. 'I shall let him slide,' he said, 'and I shall think myself well out of a bad bargain.'

'I shan't let him slide, Search,' said Gerard, very very softly. He had a hand on Hiram's arm, and gripped it so that he made him wince. There was not another word spoken between them; and Gerard, though Hiram saw him several times reading the line on the frayed envelope, never recurred to the subject.

It need scarcely be said that the names of the runaways were never spoken in his presence, or that in spite of that fact they were much talked of. Many a time the sound of Gerard's solid step hushed the talk of his mother and Milly; but the young fellow's stony face never gave a sign that he knew the theme of their converse. Many and many an unspeakable pang his loyal heart suffered, but after the one outburst he hid everything. There was much to trouble his mother in those hard days; but she took everything as women do, with that sublime and quiescent heroism which is the best of their many virtues. A good wife and mother—how shall she be praised? Not—though the wise man of old so praised her—that she seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands, and, like the merchant's ships, bringeth her food from afar; but yet as the wise man praised her, that the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and that her children have a right to arise and call her blessed. Though she feared for Gerard, in the unnatural calm he bore, she was yet not without pride in him. He was a man, this baby she had nursed. Oh, quaint and sweet and pitiful! she remembered—she saw—the infant almost every time she looked at the man, and had just such a tenderness for him now as she had when she nursed him, and no less a desire to protect and defend him. It was one of the poor soul's griefs that she could protect and defend him no longer. Mothers suffer in that way. And yet she was proud that her son bore his grief manfully, and stood under Fate's heaviest inflictions in this rock-like calm, that would not move till riven. Amongst her griefs was one which I must needs indicate; but I leave it with an indication and no more. From the time of Constance's flight, Gerard refused to set foot in a church, or to sit at that decent ordinance of family worship which had always formed one of the household ways. In other matters, he did with a certain heaviness and solidity of manner, as though it were a task, what he had once done gracefully and naturally. He was much alone, riding solitary over the moors and about the coast. He liked to have Hiram with him at times; but he very rarely spoke to him.

The gaunt Yankee could ride as well as he could do anything else, and he used to hang a little behind his master, mounted on a nervous finicking thoroughbred, ruling him with half-unconscious skilful hand, whilst he kept his eyes for the most part fixed on the figure ahead of him. The whole countryside became familiar with Gerard, riding lonely, or paired with Hiram; and the general sympathy was loud on his side, and deep in its condemnation of Val Strange.

And now from purpling moors, and fields yellowing to the sickle, and a sky of English haze, let us get to the Mediterranean and join the wedded lovers. The sea is of that perfect blue which only lives in its waters. Every slow-heaving wave that falls against the vessel's side looks hollowed from some transcendent liquid jewel—the colour of the sapphire is shallow by the side of it—and every time the crest tumbles over, it shakes and breaks into diamonds. The sunlight rains down a million little arrowy points of light upon the waters. There is land on each side, if those purple cloud-like fantasies that seem to rise and fall at such vast distances are really of the earth and earthy.

Val and Constance are lolling near each other on the deck, in cane-chairs, sheltered from the sun-god's too savage courtship of the sea by a canvas awning.

'You are sad, Val,' said Constance, looking up from her book.

'Not I,' said Val, brightening a little, and withdrawing his eyes from some dreamland in which, to judge by his looks, he had seen unpleasant things. 'Why should I be sad?' His looks caressed her as he turned to her.

'Who knows?' she said, and lay back silent for a while.

'You are not sad, are you?' he asked after a pause.

'No,' she answered with a ghost of a smile. 'Why should I be sad?'

'Like a good wife,' said Val, 'you base your reasoning on mine.'

She smiled faintly in answer, and again they were silent. But in real truth they were both sad, and there was a reason for their sadness. If a man sins, however sweetly, he is pretty sure to suffer for it; and now Val's own scorn was master of him, and in proportion to the very virtues left in him, he suffered. He was never altogether free of Gerard's face, and the accusations it had power to bring against him. A dull man sins with comparative impunity. An imaginative man, who has a heart to feel his own imaginations, suffers out of all proportion, and is yet justly served, inasmuch as he has sinned more deeply, having the more virtue in him to sin against, and seeing beforehand whither he is bound. And so Val and Constance, having sacrificed so much in order to be happy, were unhappy after all. Alas, it was always so. Of what avail can it be to preach a sermon here? There is no royal road to happiness, along which no pains shall be endured.

Constance arose, and looked over the little vessel's side at the sparkling waters; and after a while, Val joined her.

'This is all very wonderfully beautiful,' she said, with a little wave of her white hand.

'Yes,' Val assented.

'What is that splendid jewel out there?' she asked. 'I suppose when we come nearer, we shall find it a mere rocky island. What is it called?'

'I don't know, darling,' said Val drearily.

'Get out your sailing-maps,' she said, striving to occupy his thoughts, 'and let us find the names of the places we are passing.'

Val obeyed her; and having descended to the cabin, returned with a roll of charts, laid them on a table, had a brief talk with his sailing-master, and having discovered the position of the yacht, began to name the islands here and there. Constance with forced animation stood over him and assisted in the search. He looked up suddenly, and their eyes met. Val dropped his gaze and walked to the side again; and as Constance bent above the charts, a tear fell upon them. She could not please, she could not soothe him; she had no power to exorcise this demon of regret. She left the deck and went below; and Val having hung a while over the rail, turned and missed her. He began to fold up the charts, and saw the great starred tear-drop on one of them, and his heart fell lower and lower. Somewhat sullenly, he lit a cigar and paced to and fro upon the deck. He loved her with his whole heart; there was nothing he would not do to make her happy, if he could but see his way to it. He was sure of her love in turn, and yet they were both moody, both unhappy.

The French cynic proclaimed that two things were essential to happiness—a hard heart and a good digestion. Though I should be inclined to widen the list a little, I do not think I should quarrel with the essentials. A hard heart is a great help to personal comfort. If you can pass a shivering beggar in a snow-storm and feel your own broadcloth no reproach to you, that is in its way a gain. Perhaps—human nature is perverse—perhaps you would rather be without the gain, though not, in spite of pity, without the broadcloth. This life is but a twisted skein for a man with a conscience. With a hard heart, great gift, you may push through the thin filamental knots almost without an effort. If they are made of human nerves, the nerves are not yours. What resolute creature, bent on happiness, can be stopped upon his way by cobwebs?

But here were two people of more than common tenderness, and they suffered. The very narrowness of the life which, in the double egotism of their love, they sought to live, added to their miseries, and made annui and regret inevitable. It would have been wiser to have looked for a refuge in society than in this loneliness; but though both of them knew this, neither of them altogether cared to say it.

In a while, little Mary came on deck to tell her master that dinner was laid in the cabin; and he descended. Fish and flesh of the daintiest, fruits, and wines of famous vintage; and love at the table too, with manly grace and feminine beauty, and yet no joy in anything. They came on deck again, and found the awning cleared away, and a Mediterranean sunset in the skies. A miracle of colour from zenith to horizon, and the purpled rosy golden glory flushing, though more faintly, to the very east. But in the west from which they fled, the dying sun

was clothed in splendours which were past all speech, and all the fiery solemn regalities of colour in the sky were imaged in the heaving sea upon a million broken mirrors. From form to form, from tone to tone, from gradual change to change, the glory stole downward into gloom, till here and there, amid the shadowed wrack of skyey gallery and tower, a clear star shimmered, and the day was dead, and night unrolled her own calm panorama. Now there were voices in the waves, and murmurs in the air, and mystery and darkness were abroad. The sad-hearted wedded lovers paced together on the deck, until the moon arose, to build a new city in the clouds, with many a long-drawn parapet and frowning battlement. There are hours when every mood of Nature's suits the soul, and these were of them. Val and Constance paused, hidden by the little deck-house from the man who held the wheel. They were all alone, and all the world to each other, but they embraced with tears, and cheek touched cheek coldly. There was a cry in the heart of each—*my fault!*

'You know I love you,' he murmured with melancholy tenderness. 'How can I make you happy?'

'There is but one way,' she answered, elinging to him. 'Let me see *you* happy!'

Sad embraces followed. The prescription was one he had no power to fulfil, and they both knew it.

It was at Corfu that they first received English letters. There was one from Reginald to Val, which said simply: 'SIR—My opinion of your conduct is probably of little value to you, though you do me the honour to sollicit it, and to offer what seems intended as a defence of your own proceedings. Perhaps, however, I shall indicate it clearly enough if I express my desire to hear no more of you—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, REGINALD JOLLY.' This stung the recipient a little, but not much. A kinder farewell would have been bitterer to him, for he was one of those men who harden at reproof, but melt at pardon. There was a letter for Constance from her father, in which he, from a heart metaphorically bleeding and broken, quite forgave her. He would rejoice, he said, to welcome her back again to that torn and shattered organ, and was at present living in Paris, where he would be delighted at any time to see her. The emotional gymnastics of this epistle had no effect upon the reader. She handed it to her husband, who, not being even yet so depressed that all humour was dull to him, chuckled above it with a half-hollow enjoyment. But Aunt Lueretia wrote a letter, which bore upon its pages the marks of tears, and in it, with many cruel upbraidings, she told Constance how the news had been brought to Lumby Hall, and how Gerard had received it. Constance would fain have left this letter unread, but the lines seemed somehow to fascinate her, and she could not get away from them.

'What is it troubles you?' her husband asked her, standing near whilst she read, crying and sobbing.—She held the letter out to him.—'May I read it?' he said.

'Yes,' she answered, rising in a sudden tempest. 'It was your doing. Read it.' And with that, she swept from the room, dropped her veil, and walked out of the hotel, angry with herself, angry with him, and bitterly remorseful.

Val obeyed her injunction, and felt the sting of it before he had gone far. 'She was right,' he said, standing with drooping head, with the letter at his feet, and his hands depending nervelessly over it. 'It was my doing, and the punishment belongs to both of us.' From that hour the unhappy wedded pair had no power to comfort or console each other. They went on to Constantinople in a wretched reserve, broken by bickerings which ended in reconciliations, but always left the breach between them a little wider. At one of the Pera hotels, Constance met friends of hers, who received her with great cordiality, and with them she and Val crossed over to Cairo. The rainy season came on, and Val gave the party yacht-room, and carried them to Naples, where they proposed to winter. The yacht hung in the bay, and for a brief month or two Constance threw herself into the pleasures of society, and was acknowledged the reigning beauty of the place. Val took to short absences, little regretted on either side; and at last with simple coldness, outwardly, though with the frost of downright despair in their hearts, they parted at Christmas-time, and Val sailed alone up the gloomy Adriatic to Venice, and left it disgusted in eight-and-forty hours, and sailed back to the Mediterranean, and everywhere carried his broken hopes and his remorse with him.

About the end of January, Gerard was on a visit, when some people unknown to him, and knowing nothing of his story, came to stay in the same house with him. One of them told the tale of Mr Strange's curious desertion of his charming wife. Mrs Strange was fascinating all the world of Naples, and Mr Strange was yachting about alone—at that time of year too, and was it not extraordinary?

'Hiram,' said Gerard that evening, 'I shall want you to come with me to London to-morrow.'

Hiram quietly assented, and began to get things ready for the journey.

'If that man's come back again,' said the watchful body-guard, looking at his master's face, 'I shall have to keep a pretty sharp look-out to hold you out of mischief. I've got my score against Valentine Strange, Esquire; but I ain't goin' to see you hanged for him, mister. Not if I dog you like a shadder!'

RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ANGLO-INDIAN CHAPLAIN.

OUR readers need hardly be ashamed if they are not well acquainted with the existence and whereabouts of Bangalore, for not every intelligent Briton is so geographically enlightened. On my return home, I took up my abode at a certain watering-place, and of course one of my first duties was to apprise my friends abroad of my safe arrival. Accordingly, I wrote a letter, and carried it to the post-office, where I inquired the price of the postage to Bangalore. The official looked at me dumfounded, and speedily reduced me to a similar condition when he made the Scotch reply: 'Bangalore! Where is it? Is it in the West Indies or the East?' I had not been many months in the country when I found

that this post-office official was not the only one who had a hazy idea as to the whereabouts of Bangalore.

Well, then, Bangalore is a large city in Southern India, with two hundred thousand inhabitants, situated about two hundred miles inland from Madras, the European capital of the Mysore country, a large military cantonment, and one of the most beautiful and delightful stations in all India. Sir Walter Scott speaks of it as 'Bangalore the strong, the happy, the holy city;' and here I cannot help paying a tribute to the genius of the great novelist. In the *Surgeon's Daughter*, the plot of which is laid in India, he describes the country over which he carries his heroine and her deliverer, stretching from Madras to Seringapatam, as minutely and accurately as if he had himself traversed the whole route, and looked down from its heights upon every plateau and every city. It was my good fortune some years ago to live in Bangalore, and I have some recollections that may be not uninteresting, connected with this Indian city.

War gives dreadful prominence to localities. A little town remains buried for centuries in peace and obscurity, until a great battle is fought near it; and then its name is echoed to the ends of the earth, and it henceforth finds a place on the pages of history. Who ever heard of Sadowa until a few years ago, when the Austrian forces were crushed beneath its walls; and not many people knew anything about Sedan until the bugle sounding from its ramparts proclaimed to the astonished world that the French Emperor and his army had surrendered. And even the wretched kraals of Zululand were made famous through the surgings of war, disaster, and victory. Thus it was that war made the names and places of the Mysore country very familiar to our grandfathers, as the spot where our great Wellington was then winning his first laurels. For thirty years and more we waged war against Hyder Ali and Tippoo Saib; and although at last victory was ours, and we effectually destroyed that proud and cruel Moslem dynasty, it was not until after many hard-contested fights, and not a few humiliating reverses.

One of these Mysore fortified cities, and the second in importance, was Bangalore. It is situated about two miles distant from the present English cantonment. The Fort and *pettah* were stormed and taken by the English under Lord Cornwallis in 1791. A monument to the memory of the fallen stands opposite to one of the gates, and its inscription tells us that Colonel Moorhouse and other gallant officers and soldiers fell on the very spot at the 'storming of Bangalore.' The Fort still presents a very imposing appearance. With its deep morass and massive ramparts, and innumerable turrets and loopholes, one would have imagined that

although it could not stand against the monster guns of our day, yet it might have made a more stubborn resistance than it did against the British troops in those olden times of a very imperfect artillery. But I suppose that fortune favoured the brave then, as she does still. In this Fort of Bangalore is one of the famous palaces of Tippoo Saib, his favourite residence during the lifetime of his father. It is now very much in ruins, but even these still tell of the barbaric splendour of the Moslem ruler. Here was enacted the tragedy so graphically described by Sir Walter Scott in the work already alluded to, when the arch-traitor Scotchman was revealed by Hyder Ali and put to an instant cruel death.

In this connection, I was told the following romantic incident by an old general officer at Bangalore. Many years ago, a landed proprietor in a midland county of Scotland, whom we shall call Stewart of Stewartfield, was outlawed for homicide, and disappeared from the country, leaving no clue to his whereabouts. Time rolled on; and there being still no tidings of the outlaw, his estate was placed under judicial custody, for the benefit of his representatives. After the lapse of many years, the property was claimed by a near relative, who became proprietor, and who, in default of direct proof of the outlaw's death, is said to have tendered, on affidavit, the following circumstantial evidence of it, as related by the late Colonel Campbell of the 74th Highlanders.

When Seringapatam was invested by the English forces in 1791, after the defeat of Tippoo Saib's army at the battle of Mallavelly, the Sultan sued for peace. Accordingly, a meeting of Commissioners was arranged to take place within a garden-house in the immediate vicinity of the fortress, to draw up a treaty. The Commissioners met; and while their proceedings were being engrossed, Colonel Campbell, who was one of the British Commissioners, sat intently gazing at the Mohammedan Commissioner who sat opposite to him at the table. At length he exclaimed half-aloud to Colonel Edington, another Commissioner: 'If Stewart of Stewartfield is alive, that's the man;' pointing at the same time to his Mohammedan *vis-à-vis*. Although the remark must have been heard by the Mohammedan Commissioner, he made no sign; but on the breaking up of the conference, and as Colonel Campbell was leaving the room, a voice whispered in English from behind him: 'Don't look round, or it may cost me my life; but meet me alone, outside the — sally-gate at midnight to-morrow.' Notwithstanding the warning, Colonel Campbell was startled by the occurrence, and involuntarily looked round, and saw the same grave Mohammedan Commissioner, whom he had suspected to be Stewart of Stewartfield, moving off in an opposite direction. Campbell kept the tryst at the spot named; but the other party, whoever he was, never appeared. Cautious inquiries were subsequently instituted about the individual in question; but nothing was elicited; nor was he again seen or heard of by any of the British officers to whom his features had previously been familiar. It was surmised that his communication with the English officer in his own tongue

had been overheard, and that probably he had been assassinated as a traitor—the fate he anticipated.

Not once, but several times have I seen a Scotchman inadvertently revealing himself under the garb of a Turk. A few years ago, a venerable Mussulman was to be seen daily in the cool of the evening taking his solitary drive along the sea-beach at Madras in his palanquin carriage. Of course he was looked upon as a genuine son of the Prophet, until one day he was taken aback, as many people are, by the exorbitant demand made upon him in a European shop for some European article. His indignant feelings laughed at his disguise, and asserted their nationality in the strong Scotch expression: 'Gude save us; it's no worth a bawbee!' When on my way home, and when on board a small Turkish steamer in the Bay of Alexandria, we were having our luggage passed by two Turkish custom officers. I scanned the features of one of them, and ventured to say to my friend Major F——, standing beside me: 'If I were a betting-man, I would stake something upon that Turk being a Scotchman.' The official heard me; and with a cunning leer, he turned to his companion, and evidently for my satisfaction, addressed him in the broadest Aberdonian dialect.

I must now return to the Fort of Bangalore, for it can tell us another old-world story, not uninteresting to Scotchmen. In an inner court of Tippoo's palace is a deep well, overshadowed by a large tulip-tree. It is now dry, and the dwelling-place of creeping things; but it was not so in Tippoo's days. From its depths were drawn up in rich abundance the cooling waters; and the beasts of burden that were told off to this duty were the English prisoners. There, to the amusement of the ladies of Tippoo's harem, as they looked down from their iron-barred window, the captive English officers were wont to trudge up and down the incline, as they alternately pulled up the full and let down the empty bucket. Among those officers, for many weary months, was to be seen the burly figure of young Sir David Baird. And not far from this well, in one of the deep dark gateways, is the cell where Sir David and his fellow-prisoners were for a time immured. When I looked into its dreary gloom, I remembered the caustic exclamation of Sir David's mother, when the news reached Scotland of her son's capture. Referring to the method in which prisoners were chained together, and to her son's well-known irascible temper, she exclaimed: 'God pity the lad that's tied to our Davie!'

It is pleasant to remember how kindly and mercifully this same noble, albeit fiery Scotchman afterwards behaved, when victory was his, to those very Mohammedan princes, who for four years had subjected him to cruelty in their dungeons at Bangalore and Seringapatam. At seven o'clock on the morning of the 3d of May 1799, Colonel Wellesley, who had attacked the latter place, reported that the breach in the walls was practicable. A storming-party composed of upwards of four thousand men, divided into two columns, were instructed, after entering the breach, to file to the right and left along the top of the rampart. The command was intrusted to Sir David Baird, who had been nearly four years

immured as a captive in the gloomy dungeons of that fortress which he was now about to enter as a conqueror. On the following morning, the troops destined for the assault were got into the trenches; and at the hour of noon they rushed into the breach and took Seringapatam by storm in an incredibly short space of time. Tippoo Sultan, pierced with four wounds, was found dead under a dark gateway of the fortress, where his flight had been stopped by a detachment of the twelfth regiment.

Major Allan was sent to inform the persons within the palace that if they surrendered immediately, their lives should be secured. He afterwards conducted the princes to the presence of General Baird, who had himself experienced the cruelty of their father. His mind, too, had been inflamed by a report, just then received, that Tippoo had murdered all the Europeans made prisoners during the siege. He was, however, sensibly affected by the sight of the princes; and his gallantry on the assault was not more conspicuous than the moderation and humanity which he on this occasion displayed. He received the princes with every mark of regard; repeatedly assured them that no violence or insult should be offered to them, and he gave them in charge of two officers to conduct them to headquarters in camp. They were escorted by a European guard, and the troops were ordered to pay them the compliment of presenting arms as they passed. Everywhere within and about the palace, evidence met the eye or ear of the depraved and sanguinary tastes of Tippoo. His name meant 'tiger'; he called his soldiers his tigers of war; and the tigers of the Indian jungles were his pets, and often his executioners; for the attendant that offended him, or the prisoner that was brought into his presence, was not unfrequently turned into a barred room or large cage, where the savage animals were let loose upon him. Near the door of his treasury, an enormous tiger was found chained. There were other tigers in the edifice, and so numerous as to give some trouble to Colonel Wellesley.

The history and character of the son of Hyder were in a manner told by the barbarous big toy invented for his amusement, which was found in his palace, and which may now be seen in the library of the East India House, London. This rude automaton is a tiger, killing and about to devour a European, who lies prostrate under the savage beast. There is likewise in the palace of the Rajah of Mysore another automaton figure of a tiger, life-size, so set on springs, that Tippoo could make it leap and light on the person of any unsuspecting visitor, who of course imagined that he was assailed by a living tiger, to the great merriment of the monarch. As evidences still extant of the wild cruelty of this Sultan, I may mention that at Nundidroog, a fortified hill near to Bangalore, there is a huge projecting rock, five hundred feet above the underlying valley, which is called 'Tippoo's Drop,' as over it he was wont to hurl his prisoners; and in the dungeons of the fortress, which are naturally-formed caves, are still to be traced, engraven on the rock, as by rusty nails, the names of English and Scotch soldiers.

Looking out from the ramparts of the Bangalore Fort, we get an excellent view of the old city, with its low, flat-roofed houses and its narrow

streets, with innumerable palm-trees, whose stems rise up tall, slender, branchless, until, from their towering tops hang down their graceful foliage and clustering fruits. The principal street of the *pettah* or town stretches from the Fort gate, and is about a mile in length. During early morning, and after the heat of the day is gone, this street is as crowded as the Trongate of Glasgow. To be sure, it is not so wide, nor are its houses on both sides so imposing, but yet it is a very busy scene, full of great interest, and not devoid of the picturesque. It is peculiarly Eastern; and perhaps its aspect to-day is little different from what it was centuries ago, long before the name and rule of England were known in India. For Bangalore was an old city, even when it was surrendered to Hyder Ali by the native prince, who had not the power to resist the might of the usurper. And under the wise and judicious rule of Hyder, Bangalore increased in importance and wealth, and attained a pre-eminence in the manufacture of silks and carpets.

Of course, when war broke out it had its evil days; its very riches made it the coveted prey to needy friend and plundering foe. When Tippoo Saib wanted money—and it is to be feared that was not a rare occurrence—he did not, as our Chancellor does, increase the Income Tax, or make us pay for the luxury of handling a gun or keeping a dog; that was altogether too slow a process for Tippoo. He wanted money, and forthwith money must be had. The demand admitted of no delay; so, in his extremity he was wont to surround the city of Bangalore with his troops, and holding over the inhabitants the threat of instant plundering, he so fleeced them, that the very women were obliged to part with their most trifling ornaments. But luckily, Tippoo Saib was slain, and the Company reigned in his stead; and under the latter's peaceful and benign rule, Bangalore very soon arose from the dust, put off her sackcloth and ashes, and once more clothed herself with prosperity and riches.

Bangalore is now a more thriving and more important city than ever it was, and its inhabitants form a large, industrious, and on the whole wealthy community. The most important articles of manufacture are silks, cloths, and carpets; for the production of all of which Bangalore has earned a wide reputation throughout India. Thus, under British rule, and stimulated by British enterprise, this Indian city is flourishing. And yet so strangely perverse is human nature, there are to be found not a few of those ignorant Hindus who sigh for the 'good old times,' and do not hesitate to say to us: 'All very well, Sahib, but oh, give us back our old Raj!' It is difficult to make the Hindus grateful to us, and it is almost an impossibility to make them love us. There is a breach that cannot easily be spanned between the conquerors and the conquered, between the white-faced strangers and the dark natives of the soil. We are giving to them, almost without money and without price, the splendid trophies of our scientific research; we are making them the sharers of our commercial enterprise and wealth; we are educating them in our best and purest knowledge; and yet I feel, and every Anglo-Indian feels, that there is a mighty chasm between the Hindu mind and ours, between their sympathies and ours. Still, we will not despair.

There are evidences of a day of better things; and prejudices, bigotries, social barriers are being gradually beaten down by advancing intelligence.

MY NEW FRIEND.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

ACTING upon our friend's advice, and overborne perhaps by his energy, we told Lizzie to ask the applicant into the room in which we were seated, which, bad as it was, was by far the most presentable part of the house. The stranger was heard descending the stairs slowly, and apparently with caution; then he presented himself at the open door, and, in obedience to my invitation, entered and took a seat. He looked round slowly upon us, and then, fixing a large double eyeglass upon his nose, looked again. He was a stout man, apparently about sixty years of age, for his hair was gray, his whiskers quite white, and though at one time he must have been of powerful frame, he was now evidently somewhat feeble, as we could judge by the manner in which he seated himself and groaned slightly as he did so.

'I am sorry to intrude upon you at this time of the evening, madam,' he began; 'but I noticed the bill in your window a few days ago, when I was in this neighbourhood. As I must reside somewhere in this vicinity, I should have called earlier; but I was not quite certain that an old friend could not accommodate me. I find now that he cannot do so, so have ventured to trouble you at this unusual hour.'

'Ah! I am afraid, sir, that an unfortunate change has put it out of my power to offer you suitable apartments,' I replied. 'To be frank, sir, I have now not enough furniture for myself, instead of being able to spare any for my lodgers.' While I had been speaking, the old gentleman had dropped his eyeglass, and now, ere replying, he felt about for it in a helpless way, which would have been laughable if it had not been somewhat pitiful too. Adjusting it to his eyes again, he looked at us for a moment, then said: 'I don't want furnished apartments. I ought to have explained that at first. I have not long come home from abroad; and my only daughter, with whom I have been staying, has now gone with her husband to Australia; leaving me a little furniture, in case I like to keep on the house. But I don't like it; it won't suit me at all. I want a quiet lodging with a small family, where I can furnish my two rooms; taking my meals by myself, or with the family, as I please. I am a quiet person, I think, rather an invalid, but no trouble; and I am willing to pay you rent for my rooms, and thirty shillings a week for my board.' His eyeglass tumbled down once more, and while he was fumbling for it—for he did not seem able to do anything without it—Scate nudged me with his elbow, and gave a knowing wink.—'I thought it best to explain that I cannot afford very high terms, madam,' continued the old gentleman, addressing my wife, 'in order to save discussion. I have made a memo. of two other addresses which may suit, but should prefer to close without further trouble, as, being an invalid, I do not care about much worry. There is my card. He handed to Mr

Scate, who sat nearest to him, a card, from which the latter read aloud, 'Mr Daniel Chelps,' and then passed it to me.

'Mr Chelps,' exclaimed Scate, as if struck with a sudden thought, 'allow me to offer you some refreshment.' Mr Chelps, turning his head a little towards him, said: 'Will you please to speak a trifle louder, sir? I am unfortunately a little hard of hearing.'

Scate loudly repeated his invitation; it was easier for him to speak loudly than in a subdued key.

'No, sir—no, sir!' returned the other with a sad smile. 'You have brandy there, I think, and the doctors won't allow me to touch anything but sherry.'

'Then, it's just the thing!' cried Scate; 'for this is sherry, and the best you'll find within five miles from this place, I'll bet.'

The old gentleman sipped the wine, smacked his lips approvingly, and said: 'And now, sir, we will proceed to business.—I do not see, madam, that the misfortune to which Mr Matley has alluded need make any difference in my plans. I am an old man, as you see, and merely want to be comfortable. I want, as I have said, to live where I can either mix with the family, or shut myself up in my own room, just as I please. I shall give no trouble; and though I cannot afford more than I said, my money is safe. I want to settle my plans to-night; and I must honestly own, that from some little information which I obtained in my first inquiries, a week or so back, I should prefer to come here to anywhere else I have heard of, believing I should be more comfortable.'

Finding him still willing to go on with the negotiations, I at once declared my anxiety to obtain a tenant, and although he asked a few questions, Mr Chelps made no difficulties, and it was arranged that he should take up his quarters with us on the following day. The effect of the sherry upon him was to open out his heart; for he grew so loquacious and discursive, that with very little encouragement he would have told us all about his married daughter who had gone to Australia; about the late Mrs Chelps, on whose worth he dilated, and to whose memory he wiped his eyes; and would, I believe, have furnished us with complete biographies of every relative he had ever possessed. We got rid of him chiefly through the tact of Mr Scate, who declared he was going to the street through which ran the omnibus the old gentleman wished to catch, and he offered his company, which the other very eagerly accepted.

Mr Chelps having no friends in the vicinity whom he cared about troubling in the matter, gave us the name of a firm somewhere down by the Docks as referees. I say 'somewhere down'; for I did not take the trouble, as I ought to have done, of going there to make the proper inquiries. He had done business with them, he said; and they had known him, at home and abroad, for years. He insisted on paying a deposit; and while he was settling this with my wife, and she was writing down the address of his reference, which was rather a tedious affair, as Mr Chelps's memory for names and addresses

did not appear to be very good, Mr Scate seized the opportunity of saying a few words in an under-tone to me.

'This is a lift!' he said. 'You have let your place, and let it well too, I consider, to an old fellow with no wife or relative to bother you or give trouble. Didn't I tell you your luck would turn?—and here it's turning like the tide. Tell your good little wife to keep up her spirits. I shall be round to-morrow night, and I expect to see my friends between this and then. I am sure to have something to tell you; and while you are waiting, if a five-pound note is of any service to you, it is ready at a moment's notice.—Coming, sir!—quite ready.' This was in answer to Mr Chelms; and then the two left the room and the house together; Mr Scate turning at the last moment to favour us with a grin full of meaning.

It may be guessed that Susan and I sat up for some little time talking over the strange and unexpected events of the night; of our good fortune in securing such a lodger; and what a good thing, too, it was that he had not come a few days earlier, when he would have been subject to all the annoyance and turmoil of the sale. We could manage now, poor Susan thought, especially if I could contrive to obtain some employment, which I seemed likely to do through the disinterested kindness of Mr Scate. This latter recollection of course started another subject of conversation, and we could hardly say enough in praise of him. Yet it was plain we had each a secret but very real dislike to the man, which we sought to smother by continual laudation of him. It would have been ungrateful in the highest degree to utter a word which could reflect anything but praise of him—so we did not say it; but we found out that each thought unfavourably of him all the same.

Well, the morning came; and punctually at the time he had named, came Mr Chelms also, closely followed by a small van-load of furniture. We were pleased to see that this furniture was all in good condition; was, in fact, almost or quite new, so bright and shining was everything. He explained, on our remarking upon this, that his married daughter who had gone to Australia, had furnished some rooms entirely for him, just before she knew she was going, and that her departure was very sudden. He was as chatty as before, having a nice sympathising way, which won very much upon Susan, who was greatly taken with him.

The deposit he had left in my wife's hands had enabled us to purchase one or two necessities, and even luxuries; and in the evening Mr Chelms joined us at tea, and was so cheerful in his conversation, and so full of queer little anecdotes, that he quite led us away from our own troubles, until he brought them back by asking, but in a very nice way too, what I thought of doing in the future. I told him that so far as my own resources and influence were concerned, I had little prospect of doing any good, but that a friend—an entirely new friend, indeed—Mr Scate, the gentleman whom he had seen on the previous evening, had most generously, most unexpectedly come forward, and had almost obtained the promise of a situation for me. As in duty bound, Susan and I here broke into praise

of Mr Scate, and told how he had been an entire stranger, and how he was the only one who showed anything like a kindly feeling towards us.

While I was talking, and while Susan was talking, Mr Chelms listened with great intentness; but it was difficult to avoid a smile when I saw him put up his double eyeglass, as though he listened with it; and then, when it fell off, as it was continually doing, the helpless way in which he would grope about for it, was more comical still. We raised our voices at first when speaking to him; but he told us there was no occasion for this with us, as, when persons spoke clearly and distinctly, he could hear them much better than he could those who bawled at him. He was very much interested in our account of Mr Scate, in whom he declared he had taken an interest at first sight.

Very soon after this, the latter's loud knock was heard; and then Mr Scate was immediately shown in. Mr Chelms rose as he entered, and after a very friendly bow to the visitor, said to us: 'I shall be down again in a few minutes. Mr Matley, when, if you will allow me, I will sit for half-an-hour and have a chat with Mr Scate and yourselves.' Of course we all said we should be much pleased if he would join us, Mr Scate probably being the most emphatic of the three; and the old gentleman toddled slowly up-stairs.

Scate listened to his retreating footsteps with a knowing look, until he was satisfied Mr Chelms was out of hearing; then turning to us with the grin and wink so customary with him, said: 'You've got the old boy all right then?—You will always recollect, Mrs Matley, that I said at the first moment "he would do." My wife assured him she should always remember this; and then Mr Scate proposed that we should sit down and talk business.

He at once said he had seen the friends from whom he hoped so much, and that they were quite willing to engage me, so that I might expect to hear from them in a few days. If I did join them, I should find it somewhat better than drudging on in a miserable office as clerk. His friends did not go in much for clerks—no, no; that was not their game. On hearing this, I naturally inquired in what 'their game,' as he styled it, consisted; but although he launched out into copious praise of their liberality, and admiration of their extensive transactions, I could not understand what kind of business they carried on, or what particular situation I was likely to fill. Yet he kept on talking about the firm, and congratulating me upon my good fortune in securing a position with them, and glancing at the confidence they reposed in him, as shown by their accepting a stranger on his recommendation, until I heard Mr Chelms's slow lumbering step approaching.

I called his attention to this, and said that we perhaps had better go up-stairs into the parlour, dismantled as it was, for a short time, in order that we might for a few minutes more speak uninterruptedly. Scate reflected for an instant, then exclaimed: 'O no. Never mind the old fellow! I shan't say anything that I don't want him to hear. I shan't let him know too much, believe me. Besides, he is rather good fun, and I like to watch him.—Hush! here

he is. Ha! Mr Chelms, he cried, with an assumption of the heartiest good-fellowship, as the old gentleman entered the room, 'how are you now?'

Mr Chelms, as he came in, answered the salutation frankly; and then Mr Scate proceeded to repeat the information he had just given to us. While Mr Scate was telling all this to Mr Chelms, my wife left us, to superintend Lizzie in her domestic operations.

Mr Chelms's mind still ran on my affairs; and as the evening wore on, he plied Mr Scate with very direct questions, such as I much wished to ask, but lacked the courage to do. Mr Scate was at first as vague with him as he had been with me; but under the pressure of the old gentleman's repeated inquiries, he eventually explained that his friends were 'general agents and miscellaneous merchants,' who bought and sold all kinds of goods for all markets, home and foreign. Anything, anywhere, they would buy if it were cheap and saleable; and would sell at the smallest profit to do business quickly. That, their business being rather peculiar, they preferred to conduct it by agents on whom they could rely—'Such as our friend here, Mr Matley,' he said—to having a central office, as other merchants did. They always bought for ready-money, which gave them a command of the market, so far as needy vendors were concerned, so that they could often obtain goods at much less than the cost of production. This applied as much to foreign manufacturers as to English. When they gave short bills to foreigners, they would always discount them themselves if required. They reckoned on a dividend of forty per cent. every year.'

The eyes of Mr Chelms twinkled and glistened more than ever as he listened to this, until finally he said, that the idea seemed so good, so feasible, and so profitable, that having a great deal of time on his hands, and some spare capital by him, he was more than half inclined to set on foot something of the kind himself. At this Mr Scate's eyes twinkled and glistened even more than those of the old gentleman, and he said that, with his influence, it was not impossible but that Mr Chelms might be admitted to take a small share in this very business. 'A most difficult thing to be done, I assure you,' said he; 'for they won't look at outsiders as a rule—turn away thousands after thousands every year, that people are almost going down on their knees and asking them to take. Yet, with my recommendation, perhaps—But how much could you invest?' he said abruptly.

'Not a great deal—not more than eleven or twelve hundred pounds, which, by-the-by, is already invested,' returned Chelms, who seemed by his tone to admit the contemptible smallness of the sum he spoke of. 'All the rest is in houses, with a few ground-rents.'

'Well, never mind; I will see what I can do about it,' returned Scate. 'When can you get at your money? I ask, because I know they are making a lot of purchases, so now will be the time.'

'As soon as you please after the first of next month,' replied Chelms. 'That is not very far off—What name did you say your firm's was?'

It was certain that Mr Scate had not mentioned any name; and he advised the old gentle-

man not to go any further with his inquiries at present, until he knew whether there would be any chance of his money being used. But Chelms by this time was in no mood to be put off or evaded, and he determined to have their names, if only to wish success to the venture.

'Bunner, Wreggs, and Carrowble, that's them,' said Mr Scate at last; and then he went on to explain that the time named by Mr Chelms was the most auspicious he could possibly have chosen for his money to be accepted, and this being the case, he would not lose a day in breaking the matter to his firm.

This so delighted Mr Chelms, that he insisted upon our having a friendly glass of something hot, which was immediately sent for, and actually proposed to sing a song, on condition that Mr Scate would help in the chorus. This the latter unhesitatingly promised to do; and Mr Chelms began *My Pretty Jane*, and sang it through, while Mr Scate repeated the last part of each verse in conjunction with him, as a chorus! Anything more awful in the way of singing I never heard; I should think nothing more awful ever was heard. Then, after a little more discussion of business matters, Mr Scate left, with many a shake of the hand from Mr Chelms, and protestations of the warmest friendship on both sides.

I think I have said that Mr Chelms's conversation was on this evening more than usually cheerful and interesting; but directly Mr Scate had left, he seemed to fall back into his natural manner. Noticing this, I did not find my liking for Mr Scate increased; in fact, it was as much as I could do to avoid thoroughly disrelishing him, in spite of the benefit he was conferring upon me and the trouble he was taking in my behalf.

TEA AND SILK FARMING IN NEW ZEALAND.

THE articles on the above subject, which appeared in this *Journal* on March 19, July 23, and August 20, 1881, seem to have created interest both at home and abroad. Many people have cheerfully, and even enthusiastically accepted the tea and silk enterprise as one well suited to the age and locality. It has also occurred to the Councils of two of our learned Societies that an impetus might be given to the movement one way or other, if papers on the subject were read before their members, or contributed to the pages of their Transactions. Accordingly, on the 31st of January, this year, the Society of Arts, London, listened to and discussed an essay; and in April the annual volumes of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland (Edinburgh) contained a contribution on the same topic.

Among the encouraging symptoms which the proposed enterprise has elicited, it may not prove uninteresting to allude to one or two. By a New Zealand newspaper, the *Thames Advertiser* of January 28, we are informed that at a public meeting held in the north of Auckland it was decided to form a joint-stock Company to commence silk-culture in that district on a commercial scale, and that four hundred shares were subscribed for in the room. Elsewhere, according to the *Colonies and India*, of

February 24 and May 12, another enterprising section of the colonists had turned their attention to tea-cultivation. The Auckland Acclimatisation Society had engaged a practical tea-grower to experiment, with the gratifying result, that 'the tea brewed from the leaves was tasted by connoisseurs and pronounced refreshing and of fairly good quality.' Referring to silk, the same authority says: 'Sericulture is certain to prove a profitable pursuit if machinery is ever introduced to utilise the raw silk. The climate is suitable for rearing the worms, while the white mulberry-tree grows luxuriantly. Many thousand silk-worms are reared annually in Auckland for mere pleasure, and if the pursuit were made profitable, an extensive industry would soon spring up; but at present there is no market for the disposal of the cocoons. There cannot therefore be any doubt about the success of sericulture.'

So far, apparently, the good seed sown by this and other journals has taken root in New Zealand; although the colonists, unfortunately, have evidently missed or overlooked the vital point formerly so strenuously dwelt upon, of lessening or spreading the expense of labour by conducting the two industries together on the same farm, by much the same set of workpeople, and under the same chief management. On this all-important feature, another paper, the *New Zealand Times* of January 12, prints the views of a correspondent with Indian experience, who says: 'In the Kangra Valley, the silk season happens just at the tea-planter's slack time, and therefore silk-rearing may be undertaken without elashing with the interests of the tea-plantations, and might indeed help these, by keeping the labour together. Add to these two considerations this other, that tea, as a rule, requires shade, and that the mulberry does the tea underneath it no harm, and we have a combination which ought to render the spread of cultivation for silk-rearing as rapid as it is profitable.'

Probably as interesting and auspicious circumstances as any which have occurred in support of this advocacy have arisen from the greatly improved attitude and bearing of the Maoris since their troublesome agitators were shut up in prison a few months ago. It appears that the New Zealand Premier, in the course of a recent provincial tour, stopped at Ohinimutu, where the Maoris were assembled in large numbers, and their leaders addressed him for two hours on the subject of their educational requirements. They wished the establishment of schools where their boys might be taught European trades. Another most pleasing reminiscence, the significance of which can hardly be overrated, was the receipt, a few weeks ago, by the writer, of a letter from a Maori chief, the Hon. Hone Mohi Tawhai, M.P. Some little time ago, the details of the enterprise in question had been sent to this native gentleman, with the view of eliciting an expression of opinion. His reply conveyed assurances of his gratification at the efforts being made to promote the establishment of tea, silk, and the other subsidiary industries, in his native province of Auckland; he referred to the growing habits of diligence he had observed among his countrymen, and their aptitude to learn whatever they might be taught; and expressed his desire to aid and assist the proposed undertaking in every

way. That the recognition and influence of Mr Tawhai should react with the happiest effect upon the other Maoris in Auckland will seem highly probable, when it is mentioned that his speech on September 6, 1881, in the House of Representatives, at the discussion of the Representation Bill, was pronounced by the *Dunedin Morning Herald* to be 'one of the most vigorous and characteristic ever given by a Maori member of parliament.'

Old colonists settled in this country scarcely need to be reminded, and our readers will feel pleased to learn, that it was the father of Mr Tawhai, in conjunction with another native of rank, who, on a critical occasion during our New Zealand military troubles, assisted the British army by collecting six hundred of their followers, and at their own expense armed, ammunitioned, clothed, fed, and even paid the men, and successfully marched them against the rebels. Living in more peaceful times, when the tongue and pen have partially blunted the sword, the loyalty of the father has been inherited by the son; and it will not be surprising if this important ally should speedily have it in his power to do more for the promotion of tea and silk culture in New Zealand than all the other influencees which have hitherto been invoked.

CONNUBIAL TRIBULATION.

'VEN you're a married man, Samivel,' says Mr Weller to his son Sam, 'you'll understand a good many things as you don't understand now; but vether it's vorth while going through so much to learn so little, as the charity-boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o' taste. I rayther think it isn't.' It is somewhat sad to find a philosopher of the senior Mr Weller's profundity undervaluing in this way the teachings of experience. That matrimony is a great teacher, no reasonable man will attempt to dispute. We have it on the authority of a widower who was thrice married, that his first wife cured his romance, the second taught him humility, and the third made him a philosopher. Another veteran believes that five or six years of married life will often reduce a naturally irascible man to so angelic a condition that it would hardly be safe to trust him with a pair of wings. A third declares that it requires the experience of a husband and father who coldly walks through the small-hours with a crying baby, while the mother inquires at half-hour intervals why he can't keep it quiet, before a man can bring himself to look forward hopefully and cheerfully to another and a better world.

The wisest policy, when you have caught a tartar, is to make the best of a bad bargain, and if you can't get the upper hand, do as Old Mother Hubbard did when she found the cupboard empty—'accept the inevitable with calm steadfastness.' It may even be politic to dissemble a little, and pretend you rather enjoy it than otherwise.

Whatever you do, don't appeal to the girl's friends for comfort or consolation. They will only laugh at you. Take warning from the unfortunate young man who, every time he met the father of his wife, complained to him of the ugly temper and disposition of his daughter. At last, upon one occasion, the old gentleman, becoming weary of the grumbling of his son-in-law, exclaimed: 'You are right, sir; she is an impertinent jade; and if I hear any more complaints of her, I will disinherit her.'

Equally vain was the appeal for sympathy which another unfortunate Benedick made not long ago—this time to the public at large. He was a citizen of Birmingham, and he wrote to a local paper in bitter resentment against the modern rage for higher education in women. Twenty years ago, he said, he had married a paragon of intellectual excellence. The lady had 'done wonders in high education,' and considered herself equal to any 'in high art.' But she had not condescended to make herself acquainted with such mean matters as the prices of provisions and the ordering of a household. As for paying a visit to the kitchen, she would as soon think of herself ordering the meat from that unæsthetic emporium the butcher's shop. The result of all this, wailed the wretched husband, was that 'so far as comfort goes, I might just as well have been sold for a canal boat-horse; for while I am congratulated on the gem I possess, I am made sensible of the burden it involves.' Of course this remarkable letter was everywhere regarded as a highly entertaining production, and was made the sport of facetious paragraphists all over the country.

A good deal of matrimonial tribulation was brought to light in the last census returns. Several husbands returned their wives as the heads of the families, and one described himself as an idiot for having married his literal better-half. 'Married, and I'm heartily sorry for it,' was returned in two cases; and in quite a number of instances 'Temper' was entered under the head of infirmities opposite the name of the wife. Confessions of this sort, besides being, as we have already hinted, somewhat indiscreet, are often also decidedly supererogatory, for conjugal dissensions, like murder, will out, and that sometimes in the most provoking and untimely manner. Take an illustration. At a recent fashionable wedding, after the departure of the happy pair, a dear little girl, whose papa and mamma were among the guests, asked, with a child's innocent inquisitiveness: 'Why do they throw things at the pretty lady in the carriage?' 'For luck, dear,' replied one of the bridesmaids. 'And why,' again asked the child, 'doesn't she throw them back?' 'Oh,' said the young lady, 'that would be rude.' 'No, it wouldn't,' persisted the dear little thing, to the delight of her doting parents who stood by: 'ma does.'

Conjugal bickerings would often prove extremely amusing to a disinterested spectator. In *Mrs. Gaudle's Curtain Lectures*, Douglas Jerrold has presented us with some very entertaining illustrations of the 'counsels many, sweet (?) and

precious,' besides 'the sage advices,' which the dutiful wife bestows upon her erring lord and master. Poor Candle, as a rule, thought discretion the better part of valour, and sought refuge in the arms of soothing slumber; but all men are not of such unheroic mould or docile temperament, and do not allow their wives to have it all their own way, without at least an occasional protest. 'Do you pretend to have as good a judgment as I have?' said an enraged wife to her husband. 'Well, no,' he replied deliberately; 'our choice of partners for life shows that my judgment is not to be compared with yours.'

In matters of controversy, however, the woman usually has the best of it. A witty old author advises men to avoid arguments with ladies, because in spinning yarns among silks and satins, a man is sure to be worsted and twisted; and when a man is worsted and twisted, he may consider himself wound up. The above retort might be matched by a dozen others culled from domestic controversy, in which the woman has come off triumphant. 'Really, my dear,' said a friend of ours to his better-half, 'you have sadly disappointed me. I once considered you a jewel of a woman; but you've turned out only a bit of matrimonial paste.' 'Then, my love,' was the reply, 'console yourself with the idea that paste is very adhesive, and in this case will stick to you as long as you live.' 'See here,' said a fault-finding husband; 'we must have things arranged in this house so that we shall know where everything is kept.' 'With all my heart,' sweetly answered his wife; 'and let us begin with your late hours, my love. I should dearly love to know where they are kept.' He let things run on as usual. It is not often, however, that one comes across such a crushing retort as that which a Sheffield husband received from his wife the other day, through the medium of the public press. He advertised in one of the local journals that he, Thomas A—, would no longer be answerable for the debts incurred by his wife, who seems to have been a truly amiable creature, if one may judge from the advertisement which she published next day in reply: 'This is to notify that I, Elizabeth A—, am able to pay all my own debts, now that I have got shut of Tommy.'

Some husbands would be obliged to confess, if they told the plain unvarnished truth, that when they led their wives to the altar, their leadership came to an end. 'Your future husband seems very exacting: he has been stipulating for all sorts of things,' said a mother to her daughter, who was on the point of being married. 'Never mind, mamma,' said the affectionate girl, who was already dressed for the wedding; 'these are his last wishes.' This is a complete reversal of the rule laid down by the old couplet:

Man, love thy wife; thy husband, wife, obey.
Wives are our heart; we should be head alway.

In many instances, the state of the case is rather something like the following: 'If I'm not home from the party to-night by ten o'clock,' says the husband to his better and bigger half, 'don't wait for me.' 'That I won't,' replies the lady significantly; 'I won't wait, but I'll come for you.' He is home at ten precisely.

Matrimonial dissension now and again culminates in the flight of one or other of the contending parties. A Frenchman, living in Louisiana, amused his neighbours by telling them how, when his wife deserted him in this way, he got her back without further trouble. 'Did I run after her and beg her to come back?' he dramatically asked. 'No; I did not run after her. I zhust publish in ze papaire zat I have drawn fifty thousand dollaire in ze lottery, and she vas back much quicker as no time.' There may even be some husbands, however, who would rather encourage than seek to combat or deprecate such a determination on the part of their wives. An ancient epigram tells us of 'a scholar newly entered marriage life,' who, 'following his study, did offend his wife.' The lady bitterly complains that her lord should love his books more than her society, and wishes she could be transformed into a book such as he loved to read.

Husband (quoth she), what book's form should I take?
Marry (said he), 'twere best an almanake,
The reason wherefore I do wish thee so
Is, every year we have a new, you know.

The green-eyed monster is responsible for much conjugal misery; and jealousy, as everybody knows, is often at fault, finding constant proof of its suspicions in the most innocent circumstances. Here is an amusing case in point. A French lady who was jealous of her husband, determined to watch his movements. One day, when he told her he was going to Versailles, she followed him, keeping him in sight until she missed him in a passage leading to the railway station. Looking about her for a few minutes, she saw a man coming out of a glove-shop with a rather overdressed lady. Blinded with rage and jealousy, she fancied it was her husband, and without pausing for a moment to consider, bounced suddenly up to him and gave him three or four stinging boxes on the ear. The instant the gentleman turned round, she discovered her mistake, and at the same moment caught sight of her husband, who had merely called at a tobacconist's, and was now crossing the street. There was nothing for it but to faint in the arms of the gentleman she had attacked; while the other lady moved away, to avoid a scene. The stranger, astonished to find an unknown lady in his arms, was further startled by a gentleman seizing him by the collar and demanding to know what he meant by embracing that lady. 'Why, sir, she boxed my ears, and then fainted,' exclaimed the innocent victim. 'She is my wife,' shouted the angry husband, 'and would never have struck you without good cause.' Worse than angry words would probably have followed, had not the cause of the whole misunderstanding recovered sufficiently to explain how it had all happened.

Why is there so much connubial tribulation in the world? Many reasons might be stated. Dean Swift says the reason why so few marriages are happy is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages. But it is manifestly absurd and unfair to saddle all the blame upon the wives in this way. George Eliot tells us that marriage must be a relation either of sympathy or of conquest; and it is undoubtedly true that much of the matrimonial discord that exists arises from the mutual struggle for supremacy.

They go to church and say 'I will,' and then, perhaps on the way home, one or other says 'I won't,' and that begins it. Some one has said that conjugal affection largely depends on mutual confidence. A friend of ours quoted this sentiment the other day in the smoking-room, and added that he made it a rule to tell his wife everything that happened, and in this way they avoided any misunderstanding. 'Well, sir,' remarked another gentleman present, not to be outdone in generosity, 'you are not so open and frank as I am, for I tell my wife a good many things that never happen.' 'Oh!' exclaimed a third, 'I am under no necessity to keep my wife informed regarding my affairs. She can find out five times as much as I know myself without the least trouble.'

As good an account of the matter as any is that of Max Adeler. 'The secret of conjugal felicity,' he says, 'is contained in this formula: demonstrative affection and self-sacrifice. A man should not only love his wife dearly, but he should tell her he loves her, and tell her very often, and each should be willing to yield, not once or twice, but constantly, and as a practice, to the other. . . . Selfishness, my dear, crushes out love; and most of the couples who are living without affection for each other, with cold and dead hearts, with ashes where there should be a bright and holy flame, have destroyed themselves by caring too much for themselves, and too little for each other.'

THE RAVINE.

A HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN INDIA.

THE following adventure happened whilst a friend and I were staying at the pretty village of S—, famous for its pictures and temples. The village lies as it were in a dent of the hills, for they rise on all sides far above it, and are intersected with numerous rocky ravines, infested with tigers, panthers, &c. In the wildest and steepest of these, that ran down between the hills close to the village, a tiger had taken up his quarters, and prowling forth at night, used to kill and carry off the cattle of the villagers. When we inquired if any brave shikarees ever attempted to shoot it, we were told that it was a sacred tiger, being protected by Cūnackria, the presiding goddess of the largest temple of the village; and that it was preferable to suffer the losses caused by its ravages, than to commit the impiety of attempting to kill it, for some terrible calamity would be certain to happen to its slayer.

My friend and I thought differently; so when, next morning, we were informed of a fresh depredation that the animal had committed the previous night, we determined to attempt its destruction. Guided by some of the natives, we went to see the carcass of the bullock, which the tiger had dragged into this very ravine. Close by the carcass there were some trees, and we quickly made our arrangements. We erected a strong platform—called by the natives a *machan*

—in a neighbouring tree; and on this, the following evening, my friend and I took up our quarters, patiently awaiting the tiger's appearance. As we thought it useless for both of us to keep awake, we arranged that I should watch till midnight, and my friend from then till dawn.

During my watch, nothing occurred. The only objects I saw were the waving branches of neighbouring trees, and the gleam of the fireflies as they flashed through these shadows. The only sounds I heard were the clang of the cymbals and the beat of tom-toms, that rose from the valley below as a procession of villagers proceeded to the temple of their goddess, to beseech from her the boon of rain. Now the howls of the worshippers grow less, as the charmed charm of their priest arises; and now, under its strange powers, the cries of the fanatics cease, while the notes of the tom-tom throb pulse-like in the beat of its rhythm. Now the song ceases below, and its last notes have echoed and died in the distant clefts of neighbouring valleys; and then the only sounds heard are the cries of the jackal and the screech of some night-bird.

Towards midnight, the breeze lightens, then dies away; then gradually, through this midnight calm, a sense of dim terror steals over me, and I shiver in the chill of an indefinable dread.

Midnight has long passed, when I awake my companion, and then, after a pull at the flask, I settle myself for a nap. I hardly seem to have closed my eyes, when I am aroused by the grip of my friend. On my asking what he saw, he said that he felt unaccountably oppressed and nervous; and he expressed a wish for me to keep watch along with him. I agreed at once. As we sit waiting, I feel my feet are getting benumbed, and in spite of all my efforts, I cannot bring back the circulation. The sensation of deadness is also affecting my legs. My friend says he is suffering in the same way. Gradually my arms grow powerless, and I am unable to raise the gun at my side, and now even my neck stiffens. All my body, indeed, seems paralysed. At that moment, a crashing of sticks in the neighbouring bushes tells the approach of some animal. Louder the sound grows, and presently the bushes part and the head of the tiger is thrust forth, then his whole body, and he proceeds to his unmolested repast. With the sound of crunching bones in my ears, a deadening sensation seizes my brain, and I become insensible.

When my friend and I recovered consciousness, we were being looked after in the house of the headman of the village of S—. He told us that at daybreak a party of villagers had ascended the ravine, and finding us insensible, had immediately carried us to his house. And he ended by asking us whether we now believed in the power of the goddess and in the invulnerability of her tiger.

Before leaving the village, we revisited the ravine, and found our *machan* rested upon two trees growing close together, one of which was of a poisonous character. To the exhalations of this tree, when the breeze died away, I fancy we owe the state of coma that I have described, and the long subsequent illness, which prevented us from again attempting the slaughter of the tiger.

NATURE'S RAIN RECORD.

The rings which are clearly noticeable on the transverse section of timber correspond, as is well known, to the years of the tree's growth. These rings differ considerably in their width, and this variation is considered to correspond to a greater or less rainfall, the rings being widest in years of maximum rainfall. Dr R. E. C. Stearns has recently proposed to the California Academy of Sciences to institute a series of systematic observations of the rings of felled timber at various points along the Pacific coast, believing that from the aggregation of data obtained by this means, deductions as to the rainfall in past years, long before meteorological records were kept, might be made, the chief use of which would be to show how far years of maximum rainfall recurred in cycles.

THE CHILD-FACE.

At morn or eve, where'er I go,
In crowded streets or breezy hill,
In summer rains or winter snow,
A wistful Child-face haunts me still.

When all my life is out of tune,
And sorrow spreads her cheerless night,
It breaks forth like a gracious moon,
And gilds my gloomy clouds with light.

On the dull labours of the day
A glory-beam it seems to pour;
Forbids all wild thoughts when I pray,
And makes them purer than before.

I know not when I saw the Face;
I wist not how or whence it came;
Whate'er the time, whate'er the place,
It haunts and follows me the same.

Was it a vision gave it birth,
Or some chance memory that I keep?
Is it a habitant of earth,
Or but a dream-child born of sleep?

I cannot paint its form in words;
Its wondrous grace I cannot sing,
No more than can the April birds
Lay bare the mystery of spring.

I feel that Face will never go
As long as I draw living breath;
'Twill be my guiding star below,
And then 'twill beacon me in death.

Perchance when I have crossed the stream,
And stand upon the holy hill,
I'll find 'twas truer than a dream,
That dear Child-face, which haunts me still.

F. G. P.

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ASYLUM NOTES.

BY A 'MAD DOCTOR.'

WHEN a young medical man completes his compulsory studies, and gets his labours crowned by the mysterious ordeal on graduation day known in the northern universities as 'capping,' it is not long before he awakes to a knowledge of the fact that it is only now that he is really beginning his life's work; and the question at once arises, what particular branch of medical practice is he to follow out? He may enter the army or navy; may go in for some hospital appointment; settle down in private practice in town or country; serve as medical officer on board some of the great ocean steamers plying between the mother countries and the colonies; or he may obtain an appointment as medical officer in some lunatic asylum.

By a chain of circumstances which could be of no interest to the general reader, I determined on the last line of practice, much to the surprise of my friends, who tried by evil prognostications and other means to dissuade me from my purpose.

'You really intend to go and shut yourself up in an asylum!' said they. 'Is it possible? Why, if you are not torn to pieces the first month, you will be mad yourself by the second.'

I am afraid an incredulous smile was all the return they received for their earnest solicitations. In vain I urged that asylums were not menageries inhabited by ferocious creatures bereft of all reason, human beings in form only; or that asylums were not bastilles, where people were, without any hope of release, incarcerated, whipped, manacled, and otherwise maltreated; but that, on the contrary, they were hospitals for diseases of the mind, conducted on the most humane and enlightened principles.

It was all to no purpose. All the notions they had of asylums and the insane were gathered from old-fashioned pictures by Hogarth, or from modern sensational fictions.

Any one seized as I was with a desire to see how an institution for the insane is conducted, will enter the asylum for the first time with an almost solemn dread. Here, he supposes, will be found the most wretched of his race, brought together that they may not injure themselves or others; or for the simple reason, that they are unable to cope with the ordinary battle of life, or conduct their affairs; men and women in whom reason is overthrown, and who—many of them at least—care little how and when they are fed and clothed, or what shall be done with them.

As soon as the visitor enters the spacious building, his anxiety will pass away, and his dread will lapse into admiration and wonder. Is this a palace? There are gardens around it, laid out and kept with the greatest care. There is a farm within the grounds, cultivated not only with regard to profit, but to taste. There are workshops, in which many hands are busy, but none are overworked, and from which cheery singing and conversation may emanate. Within the house, there is in all parts perfect cleanliness and tasteful decoration. Not a room is dark, not a passage dismal. The sleeping-rooms are models of comfort, boasting of the latest improvements in spring-mattress bedding, &c.; and the living-rooms, galleries, and corridors, models not of neatness only, but of taste and beauty. In the rooms are bright pictures, flowers, and occasionally aviaries or aquaria. Hard by is a chapel, decorated in a tasteful style; and last, but not least, within the building is a grand recreation-room and theatre. If he follow one of the patients throughout the day, the patient will be found, according to his case, a member of the most perfect social system. He will have given to him, if he can do it, light work at the farm or workshops. He will be provided with books; and in the case of the county asylums to which I refer, he will be fed and lodged at an expense to the county of about ten shillings a week, in a manner which few of the lower middle-class can command. He will have the best advice in

sickness, the most skilled nursing; and above all, he will find in the Medical Superintendent, who is by necessity a scholar and a gentleman, one ever ready to inquire into and redress, if need be, his complaints.

Naturally, after the house in which they live, the next subject which attracts attention is the patients themselves. In the asylum of which I speak, they numbered about five hundred, of whom rather more were women than men. The cause of this preponderance of females over males is not far to seek, the forms of insanity from which men suffer being on the one hand more fatal, and on the other more transitory, than the forms of insanity from which women suffer. The mental diseases of the latter are less dangerous to life, but more permanent and chronic; the result being that chronic female lunatics always preponderate over male chronic cases—that is to say, speaking generally, men either die or recover, while many women remain permanently insane.

Doctors are not yet agreed as to a thoroughly good classification of the forms of insanity; but people of unsound mind may be roughly divided into two great classes—those who are depressed or demented, and those who are maniacal or violent. It is extraordinary how the idea obtains that patients who are confined in asylums are nearly all of the latter type—raving lunatics, of furious manner and action, dishevelled in dress and appearance. The truth is that the number of such cases in asylums is exceedingly small—perhaps five per cent. of the whole; and instead of the casual visitor seeing howling, violent creatures confined behind gratings or in padded rooms, he sees numbers of people orderly in demeanour and dress, working, reading, or employing themselves rationally in endless ways.

The reader may then ask: 'Why is it that people thus capable of conducting themselves with apparent propriety and self-respect, and who are able to occupy themselves usefully, are confined at all, deprived of their liberty, separated from their friends and the world?' To reply to this, it will be necessary to enter with more detail into a description of the patients.

Many who sit there so quietly, and apparently rational in conversation and demeanour, are liable to epileptic fits, which render the subject of these fits at times one of the most dangerous class of patients, some of the most atrocious crimes known having been committed in the epileptic state. A father has been known to murder a whole household, or kill his wife, or burn his house—acts for which, the moment before or the moment after, he would express the greatest horror and grief. Many such patients are aware when these fits come upon them, and earnestly express the wish to be prevented from doing what they have no earthly power to resist. The violence of these patients exceeds the violence exhibited in any other kind of insanity; their fury is blind; and without any provocation, they will rush at the nearest bystander and tear, bite, or attack him with any implement or weapon they can seize. Dr Sankey records a case in which an epileptic man while in the fields digging was seized with a paroxysm, and, rushing blindly upon an inoffensive patient near, cut him down with the blade of a spade, inflicting frightful wounds, and killing him on the spot.

Let us now look at another and very numerous class of patients—namely, those labouring under fixed or transitory delusions. Some patients, although quite able to do easy housework—able, in fact, to perform the duties of every-day life, and to occupy themselves or engage in games with apparent sanity and propriety—are, when questioned, found to labour under the most extraordinary fancies and ideas, which to any one not accustomed to the insane, appear preposterous and incredible. There is no end to the absurdity and variety of these perverted imaginations. A man will converse with you quite intelligently on the leading article of to-day's newspaper, on the last budget, or railway stock, and then suddenly inform you that his head is made of brass, and that he has no inside—that it has been all burnt out; and no amount of reasoning will convince this man to the contrary. Indeed, there is no more hopeless task than to attempt to convince an insane person of the falsity of his delusions. He believes as firmly in the truth of them as we do that we live; his ideas are the concomitants of strange and altered feelings, which have a real existence; and until these fancies pass away, they are not to be removed by demonstration or argument. Some patients, though in good circumstances, will imagine that they are financially ruined; others, of the most blameless lives, that they have committed sins for which there is no pardon, and that they are eternally doomed.

Delusions are not, however, always of a gloomy nature; on the contrary, in one of the commonest and most fatal forms of insanity, exalted delusions are the leading feature. There are patients exhibiting in countenance and manner a feeling of well-being, a conviction that they were never better in health, and never stronger, although hardly able to place food in their mouths on account of increasing paralysis. Their extravagant notions know no bounds. One will tell us that he is a king, a marquis, or a duke, nay, even at times the Almighty. At one time he is possessed of millions of money and property; at another, he is going to pull down all London to-day, and rebuild it to-morrow. He invents wonderful machines, which will make his fortune; he discovers perpetual motion, or how to square the circle; and imagines that he has been Senior Wrangler at Cambridge half-a-dozen times running. The asylum in which he lives, he imagines to be a regal abode; and the other patients, courtiers and nobles; and, 'last scene of all,' when strength is failing, and he can scarcely stand or raise his hand to his head, he tells us that he can write his name on the ceiling with a five-hundred pound-weight hanging to his little finger.

I may in this connection touch upon a subject of much public interest—namely, the supposed illegal detention of people in asylums. To be shut up in an asylum when of sound mind, deprived of liberty, and separated from the world, would certainly be, in spite of the comforts of modern asylums, a dreadful state of matters; and seeing the powers the law has placed in the hands of medical men and magistrates, it is only natural that the public should now and again be concerned even as to the possibility of such an occurrence.

Let us glance briefly at the mode of procedure for the committal to an asylum of an insane person. In public asylums, the question of the illegal detention of parish patients has never arisen, so we need only refer to the admission of private patients to private asylums. The remarks I am about to make apply to English asylums and the English Lunacy Law, which, however, differs from the Scotch chiefly in not requiring the signature of a public judicial officer such as the sheriff. The Lunacy Law enacts that before any one can be taken to or confined in an asylum, he shall be examined as to his mental condition, separately by two medical men, who, if they find him insane, will make a written statement to that effect, showing distinctly and decidedly the grounds on which they form this opinion, on a printed form termed the *Certificate*, issued by the Commissioners in Lunacy in accordance with the Act. This, together with a form filled up by the nearest relative of the patient, is sufficient legal warrant for his removal to an asylum. If a person be only partially insane, and rational on many points, but, let us suppose, the subject of some delusions, such a one will not believe that he is insane, will refuse to believe that his perverted ideas are delusions, and in consequence feel himself grievously wronged in being deprived of his rights and liberty. It is useless to attempt to convince him that he is insane; and therefore, by means of letters and other communications with the external world, which asylum officials have neither the power nor the desire to intercept, he will give himself out as a martyr to villainous legislation, which makes it possible that he, a free British subject, should be so shut up; and hence in a great measure arise the prejudice and outcry against asylums. He may write perfectly rational letters, and display no mean intellectual power in their construction, and yet his relatives with whom he has lived, and the asylum physicians who see him constantly, aver that he commits extraordinary acts, and that he is quite unfit to manage affairs in his house or business, on account of these delusions. They may even fear him carrying into execution threats of injury to himself and others, rendering living with him intolerable, and his removal necessary.

Herein lies the great difference between diseases of the body and diseases of the mind. In the former, as a rule, the patient will be aware that he is ill, and seek for and submit to treatment; but when his mind is diseased, he refuses all ministrations, looking at them in the light of insult and injury. Again, the reader might ask: Could such a case not be managed at home, without his having to undergo the odium and stigma attendant upon being classified as a lunatic? I answer: No; because such a patient is often the responsible head of a family or business, and not only does he prove detrimental to himself by his insane acts, but he involves the honour of his profession or business, and the happiness of his family. These cases become more and more difficult to deal with in inverse proportion to the amount of mental aberration; that is to say, when the delusions are not well marked nor very demonstrable; for there are many undoubtedly insane, whose insanity it would be extremely difficult to establish to the satisfaction of an opposing counsel in a court

of law, where the examining barrister may only have had one short interview with the patient, and made up his mind that his client was of sound mind.

The consideration of these points leads up to the question: Supposing such a patient recover his reason, is it not possible that, as the law at present stands, our patient may be unnecessarily detained in confinement, especially if his detention be to the pecuniary interest of his custodian? I am quite willing to admit that the Lunacy Law, and, for the matter of that, any other law, is far from perfect; yet, on the whole, its working is most equitable and just. Some time ago, however, public opinion was so strong on this matter, that a special Committee of the House of Commons was instructed to inquire into the question of illegal removal to or detention in asylums. This Committee sat for six months; and ascertained that for the last eighteen years over one hundred and eighty-five thousand certificates had been issued, and persons shut up upon these certificates; yet they did not discover a single instance in which the patient had been shut up without good and sufficient reason. Indeed, there is a reverse tendency in these latter years, namely, to let out asylum patients on the first signs of their recovering. This question is often fraught with extreme difficulty and anxiety to the physician in responsible charge of such cases; and to illustrate my meaning, let me refer to the following sad case, which occurred recently.

A young married man was removed to and confined in an asylum on account of homicidal tendencies towards his wife. After a short sojourn in the — Asylum, he showed signs of convalescence, to the great delight of his relatives, and particularly his wife, who at once began to crave for his discharge. This the superintendent refused, urging that he had not been sufficiently long under observation to warrant him in discharging him as 'recovered.' The wife, not satisfied with this, went to the higher tribunal—to the Commissioners in Lunacy, who intimated that they would inquire into the matter; which they immediately did, getting in the first instance a Report from the Medical Superintendent of the asylum where the patient was placed. They advised the wife to delay, to wait until recovery had been more thoroughly established before demanding his discharge. Still dissatisfied, however, and impatient, she applied to the Home Secretary, who in turn referred her to the proper authorities, the Commissioners in Lunacy. At length, nothing would satisfy her but his immediate discharge, which the Superintendent reluctantly acceded to, under protest. What was the result? He was the means of his wife's death the very night he was discharged.

Now, what does such a case—and there are many such—teach us? It teaches us, as Lord Shaftesbury, the noble and enlightened chairman of the Lunacy Commission has pointed out, that those who are in charge of the legal and medical duties in regard to lunacy must consider not only the interests of the insane but also the interests of the public; that they must be very careful indeed how they hastily discharge

and let loose on the public persons whom they are not quite certain have been restored to the power of self-control. Further on, referring to the work of asylum physicians, he continues: 'Indeed, I can conceive nothing more sublime and more Christian-like than the nature of their labours; and though there were in former times great instances of cruelty and abuse, my experience, extending over fifty years of the various asylums, private as well as public, is not only eminently favourable to the highest order of intellect, but to the truest and deepest sentiments of humanity towards the poor creatures placed therein.'

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XL.—'MOTHER,' SAID GERARD ON THE EVENING OF HIS RETURN, 'I AM GOING ABROAD.'

NEXT day, Gerard and Hiram were in London. The master stood with a little scrap of newspaper in his hand, on the hearth-rug of a cheerless room in an hotel; and the servant watched his countenance furtively, and drew but little comfort from it. Snow had fallen in the streets, and the sky was leaden and cheerless. The hotel was far-away East, out of Hiram's knowledge of town; and he was all curiosity to know what was afoot, and fear lest the enterprise should be dangerous for Gerard. For Hiram firmly believed that the young fellow had bent himself to have revenge upon the man who had wrecked his life; and though he would willingly have looked on at any such ceremony as a horse-whipping, he feared that no such vengeance would satisfy Gerard.

'Search!'

'Sir?'

'Bring me my overcoat, and wrap yourself up well. It's a bitter day.'

'More snow, I think, by-and-by,' said Hiram. The statement about the weather included almost every unnecessary word Gerard had spoken to him for at least a week, and he was hungry for conversation. His overture met with no answer, however, and he retired. 'Might as well valet a dumb man,' reflected Hiram, 'and be deaf and dumb myself.' Master and man prepared to face the cheerless streets. 'Come with me,' said Gerard; and set out, Hiram following. He walked briskly eastward, pausing at times to make inquiries; and after a journey of perhaps a mile, stopped before a pair of great wooden gates, and rang a bell, the handle of which nestled in the wall, almost hidden by finely-powdered snow. Behind the gates there was a great clanging of hammers on resounding iron; and when the small doorway in the gate was opened, Hiram, looking through, saw a boiler-maker's yard, and men at work there, vigorously. 'What on airth,' said Hiram to himself, 'brings the boss to a place like this? Is he going to cure himself with business? Best thing he could do.' Gerard asked a question of the man who opened the gate. His follower was deafened by the noise of hammers, and caught neither it nor the answer; but pursued him across a slushy yard with traets of melting snow in it, to a counting-house which stood beside a dry dock. Here a grimy personage

received them, and in answer to Gerard's inquiry for the principal, indicated himself.

'You have a yacht for sale or hire?' said Gerard.

'Half-a-dozen,' said the grimy principal.

'A steam-yacht, iron-built, *Channel Queen*?'

'Yes; for sale or hire. Selling price, eight thousand. Hire—crew included—hundred and twenty a month.'

'Can I see her?' asked Gerard. The grimy personage rang a bell; and a grimmer than himself answering the summons, he nodded sideways at Gerard, jerked out '*Show Channel Queen*,' and disappeared. The new-comer led them into the yard. Snow had begun to fall again, and the place was indescribably dreary. Hiram's thoughts were in keeping with it; but there was one comforting reflection in his mind. 'He means to take me with him,' he thought; 'and he'll have to get over my body to do it when the time comes.' Two minutes' walking brought them to the side of Thames, and the grimy man raised his voice dolefully, and called a wherryman, who stood smoking and watching the dirty tide of the river, a hundred yards away, with his back against a sheltering mass of timber. The man hurried up. '*Show Channel Queen*,' said the grimy guide, and retraced his steps. The wherryman grunted, and unfastened a boat which swung at the shiny and rotting piles upon the edge of the river. Gerard and Hiram seated themselves, and the man pulled across the river.

'Do you know the *Channel Queen*?' asked Gerard as they went.

'Know her,' said the boatman, with a gratuitous execration; 'why shouldn't I know her?'

'Is she a fast boat?'

'Fast? Ay; she's fast enough. There she is. Look at her. Did y'e'ver see a boat with them lines on her as wasn't fast? Not you. Nor me neither. Screw, she is. Engines is a bit too powerful. Jolts her like, when you drives her hard, her engines does. 'Eadachy sort of craft to travel in; but'—with other verbal gratuities—'can't she walk!'

'Can't I go on board her?' asked Gerard.

'Who said you couldn't?' inquired the man ungraciously; and pulling nearer, caught a hanging chain. 'Up you get,' he said with a grin; 'nobody's a-hindering of you, mister.' Gerard seized the chain, and with some damage to his gloves, went up hand over hand, and swung on to the deck. 'Tain't the first time he's been aboard a yacht, I know,' said the boatman, turning on Hiram. 'Navy, maybe; eh, mister?' Hiram made no answer, but listened to the hollow footsteps of his master on the deck, until he lost them. After a pause of perhaps five minutes, Gerard came to the rail of the vessel and called him: 'Come up here, Search.'

Hiram went up the shallow side like an exaggerated monkey, and the boatman looked after him. 'Reg'lar old salts the pair of 'em,' he said; and having knocked the still burning ashes of his pipe into the brim of his hat, nursed them carefully from the wind whilst he refilled, tilted them back again, and smoked on contented.

'Do you know anything about this kind of thing, Search?' asked Gerard, stamping a foot on the deck.

'I've knocked about 'em a bit,' said Hiram.

'I was stoker aboard one o' the Messagerie vessels for a year; an' steward's man aboard an Atlantic steamer for three v'yages. It stands to reason I looked about a bit; but I ain't a connyssure.—Hello, what's that?' A head appearing above deck startled the usually immovable Hiram.

'Man cleaning engines,' said Gerard, who had caught the infection for that verbal economy which seemed to live about the *Channel Queen*. 'Come and look at her.'

They went over the little vessel together, Hiram making observations here and there, Gerard dumb again. When they had inspected every part of her, they left, and were pulled back across the river; and the wherryman, richer by half-a-crown, returned to his sheltering heap of timber. Gerard led the way to the office, and entering, said briefly: 'I can have *Channel Queen* examined, I suppose?'

'When you like.'

'When can she sail, if I take her?'

'When you've got erew aboard and fires up.'

'Do you provision crew, if I hire her?'

'No; you do.'

'Good-morning,' said Gerard.

'Good-morning,' replied the grimy man, and shot away again.

Away once more plodded master and servant through the miry streets, the former inquiring here and there as before. This time their wanderings ended in an office, where, for the consideration of a ten-pound note, a gentleman undertook to examine the *Channel Queen* and to report upon her seaworthiness and general capacity. Next Hiram was sent off in one direction with orders for stores, to be held in readiness for immediate delivery; whilst Gerard went another way on a like errand; and so the whole day passed busily. The next day was dull and idle; but on the next a perfectly satisfactory report of the yacht having reached him, Gerard hired her for six months, paid a deposit, left references, and in great haste travelled homewards. During all this time, Hiram had felt quite clear about his master's purpose, but had puzzled himself a good deal to divine the reason which had set him so suddenly upon it, after having rested quiescent for more than half a year. The explanation came, by an unlooked-for source.

'Mother,' said Gerard on the evening of his return, 'I am going abroad.' He had always been fairly accustomed to his own way; his father's 'Very well, my lad,' having been ready in answer to most of his proposals; and latterly nobody had questioned his comings and goings.

'Not for long, I hope?' said Mrs Lumby.

'No,' said Gerard; 'probably not for long.'

His mother would not enter any protest against his going, but it cost her a pang for all that. Gerard's manner was not encouraging to hope, and she believed that he was but going away to brood above his misery; but he was so hard and stern of late, that she did not dare to venture upon any dissuasion. Milly was bolder.

'Where are you going, Gerard?' she asked.

'Where fate leads me,' he answered with a pallid smile.

'You are uncertain?'

'At present; yes.'

It was in her mind to ask him why he was

going, and she had already framed the words in which to present her question; but he fixed his eyes upon her in a way which seemed at once to anticipate inquiry and refuse an answer. She would not have felt that, but for the suspicion which filled her thoughts. He was going to seek out Val Strange—perhaps to challenge him to a duel in one of those foreign countries in which Val made his shifting home. How could she be sure of this? Not by interrogating Gerard, who would assuredly return no answer. Perhaps by questioning Hiram. She resolved to question Hiram. Milly had a little bower of a sitting-room—her own—in which in happier times she had been wont to entertain her friends; the scene of many a girlish confidence and frolic. Meeting Hiram in the corridor outside, she summoned him to this apartment.

'Do you know that Mr Gerard is going abroad?' she asked.

'I believe he is, miss,' responded Hiram.

'Do you know where he is going?'

'Well, I can't truthfully say I do,' he answered.

'Do you know why he is going?' she demanded. There was an anxiety in her manner which Hiram fully shared. He seemed to see ahead a worse trouble than had yet fallen upon the House; and though he was but newly in its service, there was no man who ate the bread of the Lumby's who was more devoted to them than he.

'Wall, miss,' he returned tentatively, 'I am not in Mr Gerard's confidence, up to now.'

Her woman's wit and native penetration told her that his suspicions clashed with hers. 'Mr Search,' she said, standing before him with pale face and clasped petitionary hands, 'may I trust you?' She did not think of her own attitude, or of the appeal in her voice; but taken together with his own fears, they touched Hiram profoundly.

'Miss,' he said, 'you may safely trust me with your life.'

'You know the whole miserable story of your master and—Mr Strange?'—He inclined his head gravely.—'I have heard,' she went on, 'the circumstances which induced my cousin to take you into his service.'—Hiram waved a deprecatory hand at that allusion, and his sallow cheek flushed a little—'and I believe you are attached to him.'

'That is so, miss,' said Hiram with preternatural gravity.

'At that wretched time,' said Milly, 'one of our fears was that Mr Gerard would attempt some terrible revenge upon Mr Strange.'

'That was my idea tew,' he answered.

'And now the same fear returns,' she said with a face of pallor.

'Miss,' said Hiram, 'excuse me. I should go with you, if it wa'n't for one thing. He's kept as quiet as a winter dormouse for half a year. Why should he fire up now, without anything to set a light to him?'

'There is a reason,' said Milly in response.

'Mr Strange and his wife are living apart from each other.'

'He knows that?' inquired Hiram.

'He knows it,' she returned. 'Mr Strange is sailing from place to place in the Levant, and

his wife is living at Naples.' At that news, a sudden certainty shot into Hiram's mind, and declared itself so plainly in his face that Milly saw it at a glance. She made a step towards him. 'What do you know?'

'There air circumstances,' said Hiram, with deliberative slowness, 'when the ordinary rules of honourable conduct must be set on one side. I think this is one of 'em. I ain't pledged to silence, but that's no matter. Has Mr Gerard Lumby told you, miss, that he's hired anything in London city, lately?'

'No,' she answered, half bewildered.

'Well, he has.' He paused again. 'He's hired—a yacht; and he's goin' to sail in her'—

'In pursuit of Valentine Strange!' she cried. 'Oh, Mr Search, this must be prevented. Think,' she said, twining her hands together, 'of the misery it will bring upon us all—his mother, his father, all who value him.'

'I'm afraid,' said Hiram, deeply moved by her distress, and sharing in it, 'it'll be about as useful to try and turn him as it would if he was St Paul's Cathedral.'

'Have you spoken to him?' she asked.—He shook his head sadly.—'Will you?'

'It ain't any use me speakin' to him,' he responded mournfully. 'No, miss. I might as well throw stones at the Solar System.' He stood despondently for a moment, and then added, but with no great hopefulness: 'You might try him.'

'I will try him,' she answered, and left Hiram standing there.

His large dark eyes and sallow features were full of mourning. 'Tain't a spark and out again with the boss,' he said sadly. 'Slow, steady goes the bellows all the time, and he's white-hot to the core. I know the sort. It's British. And an uncommon ugly sort it is to have agen you. Yes, sir.' Then with a sudden change of face and figure, he said: 'Hiram, maybe you'll be wanted yet. Mark my words, young man, and be on the spot when you air wanted. When the time comes, Hiram, you will be wanted—real bad.'

THE TARBERT SHIP-CANAL.

BY CUTHBERT BEDE.

CUTTING an isthmus and converting it to a ship-canal so as to be a highway for commerce, is a kind of engineering work for which the present century will be remarkable in the annals of history. By the Suez Canal, M. de Lesseps united the Red and Mediterranean seas; General Turr cut the Isthmus of Corinth for the commerce of the Levant; and the Isthmus of Panama may perhaps be canalised after the same fashion. Twelve years ago, the legislature of Massachusetts proposed to make a similar canal, to save vessels passing round the stormy coast of Cape Cod. It is now proposed to do the same with the isthmus of Tarbert, which connects the peninsula of Cantire with Argyllshire, and thus shorten the journey from the Clyde to the north-west of Scotland, and also save the rough voyage round the Mull of Cantire. It is also proposed to do for the Irwell at Manchester what was done for the Clyde at Glasgow—namely, to deepen it so as

to admit the tide, and thus convert Manchester into a seaport town.

The meeting at Glasgow held, in July last, to consider the scheme of the projected Tarbert Canal, was presided over by the Duke of Argyll, and received the warmest and most influential support. The Canal as proposed will be about two miles in length, with a breadth of fifty-six feet, and a depth of eighteen feet at low-water, and will thus be available for the largest vessel at present capable of navigating the Western Loch. It will save forty-five miles to vessels bound from the Clyde to the north *via* the Sound of Jura, and forty miles to those proceeding *via* the Sound of Islay; and whereas some sixty miles of the present route round the Mull of Cantire—namely, from Pladda to Gigha—is often stormy and dangerous, this risk will be entirely avoided. Glasgow and the other ports of the Firth of Clyde carry on a large trade with the north and north-west of Scotland, the annual clearances in steamers alone amounting at present to nearly five hundred thousand tons, almost all of which may be expected to use the Canal. Weather-bound sailing-vessels will doubtless also avail themselves of it; and with a transit charge of sixpence per ton, a clear revenue of twelve thousand pounds a year may fairly be expected. The cost of the undertaking is still a matter of uncertainty, but two hundred thousand pounds is given as the maximum; and, as the enterprise has met with ready support, an influential Committee elected, an engineer appointed, the preliminary details adjusted, and most of the money subscribed, there seems little doubt that in a year or two the Tarbert Ship-canal will be an accomplished fact.

Those who have travelled by those splendid steamers the *Iona* or *Columbia* from the Clyde en route to Oban, will remember Tarbert on Loch Fyne as being the last place of call before the steamer reaches Ardrishaig. Few, however, may be aware that this place of call is within half-an-hour's walking distance of an arm of the Atlantic Ocean. The narrow isthmus of Tarbert is, in fact, only sixteen hundred yards from high-water mark on the Eastern Loch (Loch Fyne) to high-water mark on the Western Loch (Atlantic), and its highest point is only forty-seven feet above the sea. The length of the peninsula of Cantire is forty miles, with a breadth from ten to twelve miles; and the southern extremity, or Mull of Cantire, is only twelve miles from the Irish coast. The steamers that sail from Glasgow to the Western Isles have to encounter the stormy and perilous passage round the dreaded Mull, causing great risk and loss of time, all which, as we have already hinted, would be obviated by the ship-canal at Tarbert. East Loch Tarbert, which opens on to Loch Fyne, is distant forty-four miles from Greenock. Its small harbour, about a mile in length, is very commodious and landlocked, having at its farther end the town of Tarbert, with large quays, so that vessels can approach the shore in deep water. At present, horsed vehicles take passengers and goods from the steamer in the East Loch, to the pier at the head of the West Loch, where the Islay steamer will convey them to Port Ellen. The West Loch is an arm of the Atlantic, eleven

miles in length, and about a mile in width, with a clear channel nearly to its head, for vessels drawing eighteen feet of water. The island of Gigha protects the entrance of the Loch from south-west gales; and the silvan scenery of this Loch is in fine contrast to the rugged rocks of the Eastern Loch.

The wonder is that the Tarbert Ship-canal was not made many years ago, its advantages being so obvious, and its construction having been demonstrated to be both practicable and paying. The low ground to be cut through consists chiefly of micaceous schist covered with moss; and as the water on each side is landlocked and sheltered, the operations in cutting the canal will not be subjected to risk from tidal waves. The engineering difficulties are thus by no means formidable. A century and a quarter ago, the project for a ship-canal at this place was seriously debated. The celebrated James Watt was requested to examine and report upon the project; and, on December 21, 1771, he sent in a statement to the Commissioners of Highland Roads and Bridges, giving his views of the feasibility of the undertaking, and handing in two estimates, the one for a canal sixteen feet deep at neap-tides high-water, to cost—according to the curiously minute estimates furnished—one hundred and twenty thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine pounds nine shillings and fivepence; the other for a canal twelve feet deep, to cost seventy-three thousand eight hundred and forty-nine pounds two shillings and ninepence. Neither of these plans was accepted; but, through the powerful influence of John, Duke of Argyll, and the Marquis of Breadalbane, the shallow Crinan Canal, farther north, was commenced in 1793 by Sir John Rennie, assisted by Captain Joseph Huddart.

The non-eligibility of the Crinan Canal, as a means of transit for vessels of deep draught, redirected attention to the isthmus of Tarbert; and, in 1846, an Act of Parliament was obtained by a joint-stock Company to make a ship-canal at Tarbert, that should be fifty-six feet wide, and have a depth of eighteen feet at low-water. Mr Gibb, of Aberdeen, was the engineer; and he estimated the expense at one hundred and forty-seven thousand nine hundred and fifty pounds; which included the deepening of the West Loch, the improvement of the Eastern Harbour, and the erection of two lighthouses. The Company, however, was dissolved; and Mr Gibb's plans were not carried out. In the following year, 1847, Captain Sir Edward Belcher, R.N., and Lieut.-colonel P. Yule, R.E., were specially appointed by government to examine and report on the merits of the proposed Canal, and their opinions were most favourable to the project. Lieut.-colonel Yule's estimate of the expense was a little over one hundred thousand pounds sterling; and he concluded his Report with these words: 'When a work of this nature, formed in a rock by mere force of labour, is once completed, it will be liable to no accidents; it will not require science to execute it, nor much money to keep it up; the lock-gates and their pliers alone will be liable to deterioration by time.' Sir Edward Belcher afforded most valuable testimony to the great importance of the Tarbert Canal in the naval defence of Great Britain. He said: 'In a military point of view,

this channel affords most important advantages to the naval defence of the western ports of Scotland. In the event of war, some naval rendezvous, as well as coal depôt, must be formed in the neighbourhood of the Clyde. The enemy would, doubtless, have cruisers watching the Glasgow, as well as the Irish trade. We will suppose the enemy's cruisers caught by a westerly gale between Ireland and the Mull of Cantire, and that the fact of his being there is conveyed to our cruisers in the Clyde; before any of our steamers could reach or pass the Mull of Cantire, even if she could face the gale as well as the sea, she might, by adopting the Tarbert Channel, pass with ease, in smooth water, to the southern point of Islay, in a state of efficiency, seek the enemy to leeward, and prevent escape; or, should her services be required on the northern coast of Ireland, her arrival by this route would be certain, when it might be impolitic, if not impossible, to attempt it from the Clyde direct.'

In the Report of the Tidal Harbours Commission for 1847, the advantages to be derived from the Tarbert Ship-canal are summed up in most favourable terms. 'There may be some difficulty arising from the difference of the levels of the tide on the east and west sides of the peninsula, said to amount at times to twelve feet, which it is proposed to guard against by placing a pair of flood-gates at each end; but it is to be hoped, when the work comes to be carried out, no practical obstacle will be found in making a thorough open cut, and that it will be wide enough and deep enough to admit, at all times of the tide, the largest war-steamer or the heaviest merchant-vessel, that either can now, or will in future, ascend the Clyde to Glasgow Quay. In the eastern part of Scotland, large sums of public money have been expended upon roads and bridges; and the testimony of all observant persons is unanimous as to the advance in civilisation, in comfort, and in wealth that has immediately followed in the wake of such improvements. But in the western districts of Scotland, and especially in the county of Argyll, the rivers, lakes, and sea are now the means of intercourse; and the very barrier that mainly prevented communication in the days of our fathers, has proved to be the great highway in our own. Steamboats are at once the heralds and the cause of every kind of improvement in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Independent, then, of the advantages of such a communication in a military point of view, every facility that can be given to uninterrupted intercourse, and thereby to the spread of civilisation, cannot but be hailed as a national benefit.'

The project of the Tarbert Ship-canal, however, again slumbered for several years; till 1861, when Mr John Ramsay, of Port Ellen, Islay, read a paper before the British Association on 'The Proposed Canal at Loch Tarbert, Argyllshire.' He spoke of it as being advantageous from every point of view; and said that 'it would, in effect, bring the numerous western islands and all the west coast of Scotland north of Cantire, sixty miles nearer to the markets to which all their produce is conveyed, besides avoiding a voyage round one of the most dangerous headlands, through the most

tempestuous sea which can be encountered anywhere on the coast of Great Britain.' A meeting of West Highland proprietors was held at Salen, in Mull, on July 19, 1861, when this revived project of the Tarbert Canal was most favourably discussed. Nothing practical, however, came of the meeting. A railway was also projected to cross the isthmus; but this also has not been carried out, though telegraph wires were taken across some fifteen years ago.

It does not appear, therefore, from the various testimonies here quoted, that there would be any special practical difficulty to be surmounted in cutting a ship-canal through the narrow Tarbert isthmus, and thus bringing the Clyde into an easier, shorter, and safer connection with the north-west of Scotland than can now be obtained by 'rounding wild Cantire.' Those words from *The Lord of the Isles*, remind us of Bruce's boat-carrying over the Tarbert isthmus, in which he imitated Magnus Barefoot, and in which example he has been followed by many herring-fishers, who have hauled their boats over the dry land to escape the perils by water at the Mull. In fact, by the aid of laying down poles for their keels to pass over, various craft have been dragged across the isthmus.

Let us hope that the Tarbert Ship-canal will speedily pass from the shadowy realms of project into an actual and accomplished fact.

MY NEW FRIEND.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

As the reader may suppose, I was in feverish expectation of a summons to wait upon Messrs Bunner, Wreggs, and Carrowble—the firm for which Mr Scate was acting—hour by hour, almost minute by minute; but the business took a very different turn. Mr Scate called one day, out of the time at which he usually paid his visits, which was generally in the evening, and said that the firm would not trouble me to call; they were quite satisfied, he said, with what they had heard from him; and not caring to multiply the agents with whom they dealt directly, preferred to consider my transactions as a branch of his own. This being the case, he would at once, if I were agreeable, commence our joint work by either seeing people at my house himself, or making appointments to which I should attend.

I could have no possible objection to this, beyond the grave one that I had no experience in buying and selling, and did not even know what kind of goods I was expected to examine. To all this he had conclusive answers. A man 'with his head screwed on the right way,' as mine was, would have no difficulty in picking up such knowledge; while at first he would see everything right for me, and when he was obliged to be away, would leave me instructions how far to go in any purchase. But there! it was making mountains of molehills to talk in that strain. Several interviews of this kind took place; and I could not help thinking that Scate took care never to hold them in the presence of Mr Chelms; and I sometimes actually thought he must lie in wait in the neighbourhood to see the old gentleman go out, so promptly did he look in directly afterwards.

But Mr Chelms was so interested in the matter, so anxious for actual work to begin, he said, that he generally extracted a pretty full account from me; besides holding long conversations on his own prospective share with Mr Scate.

Among other preparations for the agency, Mr Scate had some office furniture brought in; so that, what with a massive table and desk, half-a-dozen heavy chairs, with various racks and shelves fitted on the walls, my front parlour assumed quite a solid, banking, or life-assurance aspect, which met the approval not only of Mr Scate, but of Mr Chelms.

The first transaction which was completed in the new office, took place very suddenly—to me; and was surprising by its brevity and various special features, common perhaps to my novel business, but altogether different from my previous experience. It was conducted thus. At twilight one evening, only a few days after the subject was first broached, for Mr Scate would lose no time in the matter, he came in, and repaired to the office. He had not been there five minutes, when a man knocked at our door and asked for him. It so happened that I opened the door to this person, who, in the few words he spoke, seemed to have an unpleasantly furtive way with him; and although not disguised in any particular manner, his hat was so slouched over his brows, and the collar of his coat so pulled up, that it was impossible to distinguish his features clearly. I showed him into the office, and went down-stairs. As I did so, I thought for an instant that I caught sight of Mr Chelms's face, in the dusky gloom of the staircase, peering over the banisters. I paused to look again; but no one was there, and I went on.

In a few minutes Mr Scate called down the speaking-tube which he had caused to be carried from the office to our sitting-room, and asked me to step up. I complied, and found him with the stranger I had previously admitted; but their figures were barely discernible, as they were sitting without a light, and the twilight had now almost changed to darkness. I naturally noticed this, and offered to procure a light.

'No, thank ye,' returned Mr Scate. 'Our business is finished, and I am going out directly. I wished to introduce you to this gentleman, who will be here again to-morrow, or the next night, and will transact some business with you. Mr—a—Mr'—

'Jerry Wilkins, you know,' said the other, as Scate hesitated.

'To be sure!—of course!' exclaimed the latter. 'Mr Wilkins, this is our new agent, Mr Matley, who will carry on the business at this branch for the present; so you will know who to ask for when I am not here.'

'Yes; I shall know him,' returned the stranger. His words were not a direct reply to Mr Scate's remark, and although I could scarcely see him in the darkness, I felt he was eyeing me narrowly. However, there was little time for this or anything more, as Scate rose from his seat, and in a few words intimated that our business was concluded.

I opened the door for them, and they went out, not exactly together, for Mr Wilkins left at once, while Scate lingered for a couple of minutes on the threshold with me, although he

seemed to have nothing particular to say. As I closed the door, I again thought I saw Mr Chelms, this time at the farther end of our little entrance hall; but it was very dark there, and I might easily have been mistaken. I at once lighted the gas, and went down to our breakfast-room, where I found the old gentleman calmly smoking his pipe in the dark, and by himself; for Susan was absent, making some trifling purchases in the neighbourhood.

I apologised for his not having a light; but, in his usual cheerful manner, he said it was of no consequence, as he liked to sit and smoke in a half-dreamy state, to which twilight, or even darkness, was very favourable. He was chatty on other subjects, but, for a wonder, did not refer to business, which, indeed, was not spoken of until my wife returned. She had gone out just after I had admitted Mr Jerry Wilkins, and so naturally asked me who the visitor was. But even while I told her, Mr Chelms was too much engrossed by his pipe to pay any attention to the subject, or at any rate to join in the conversation.

Though on various occasions Mr Chelms indulged in a glass or two of grog, it is only right I should say that he never, even at first, gave us the idea that he was an intemperate man. He certainly seemed led away a little by the example of Scate, who occasionally took, we thought, a malicious pleasure in tempting the old gentleman. We did not and could not like Scate, while we both felt favourably disposed to our lodger from the beginning.

The next day Scate came early, and had a brief interview with me in the office. His object was to say that Mr Wilkins would probably call that night, and if so, would bring a parcel, of which I was to take charge, and for which I was to give him forty-five pounds. This money he gave me, all in gold.

'Am I to examine or check the goods?' I began.

'O no,' he said; 'it is all settled about them. We know Jerry, and have done many bits of business with him, so we can trust him.'

'Will you give me a receipt for him to sign,' I asked, 'or will he draw one up?'

'Receipts don't signify between people who can trust each other,' he replied.

'Why, you do not mean to say you are going to pay all this money without a receipt?' I exclaimed in amazement; 'for such a proceeding was horribly opposed to all my experience.'

'Yes, with Jerry,' he returned carelessly; 'it's our way. You will get into it soon, old fellow, and when you come to know your customers, you will deal with them accordingly. By-the-by, you may let old Chelms know that you have begun business; you may show him the money, to let him see that it's a real thing; but don't let him be in the room when you pay Wilkins. In fact, he had better not see Wilkins at all.' All this was odd; but as I knew literally nothing of the business as yet, or how the unseen firm conducted it, I could not say anything against it.

Mr Scate added one piece of information this day which was welcome. He said that my engagement would be considered to commence from this date; that a rent would be paid for

the use of my office, the amount of which would depend upon his report; and upon his report also, to be sent in at the end of four weeks—when I should be introduced to the firm—it would depend whether I was paid by salary or commission. 'And you may rely upon my report, saying the best it can for you, old fellow,' he continued. 'I could have got this settled at once; but I know what our principals are, and I am confident that to wait a bit will make a difference of fifty pounds a year to you; so you can draw on me for five, or ten if you choose, while the month runs on, and pay me at your leisure.'

It was impossible not to feel grateful to a man who did so much for a stranger, and who was so perfectly disinterested; yet—although I hated myself for allowing such a feeling to exist—I was conscious, even while I was thanking Scate, and thanking him sincerely—I was conscious, I say, that I was gradually growing almost to detest the man, my benefactor though he was.

Scate did not come in again that day; and I took the first opportunity of telling Mr Chelms what my instructions were; showed him the money, as suggested; told him that I was now fairly in the employ of the firm; that I was to be introduced to them in four weeks' time, and that my pay would be settled on such a scale as the report of Mr Scate justified. He asked me, after a moment's reflection, what the address of the firm was. I told him that I had asked the same question of Scate, who had replied, that I had better postpone all inquiries till the month was over; they would prefer it.

'Ah, I see,' said the old gentleman. 'Until that time, you are, as one may say, on probation. Very cautious of them, very, not to allow Mr Scate even to reveal their address till then.—But I like them all the better for it, sir; I do, indeed. Now, if I get my money in a few days, I may hope—as Mr Scate holds out the most favourable expectations to me—to be introduced at the same time as yourself. I should like that, because, of course, I should not invest without knowing something of the people, no matter how high my opinion of Mr Scate might be.'

I agreed with the old gentleman that he was quite right in this.

A man went by with plants in a barrow that afternoon, and Mr Chelms declaring—rather to my surprise—that he was an enthusiastic admirer of flowers, bought a number, which he told Mrs Matley—who really was fond of them—he would plant in the front garden after the sun went down. He was as good as his word too, or nearly; for he went into the garden with spade and water-can, and slowly—for it was plain he was not an expert gardener—commenced his work. I offered to help him; but the old gentleman said that half his pleasure in shrubs and flowers would be lost unless he planted them himself; so he went on until it was almost dark, making, however, but little progress.

It was between twilight and dark when a cab stopped at our gate, and a knock following, I went to the door, expecting to find—as it proved—Mr Jerry Wilkins. I had lost no time in answering the knock; but Mr Chelms was already in conversation with the visitor, and inviting him, as I could hear, to admire some beautiful

bulbs he was holding out for his inspection. Mr. Wilkins, who had struck me as being of a somewhat morose turn when I admitted him on the previous evening, looked gloomier and sulkier now. He turned with a very uncivil grunt from the garrulous old gentleman, and came in the moment I opened the door. Mr. Chelms, however, smiled with imperturbable good-humour, but, as it was too dark to see any longer, gave up his gardening for the night.

'You are not an enthusiast in flowers, Mr. Wilkins,' I began. 'I am afraid you did not see any particular beauty in the bulb which Mr. Chelms so greatly admires.'

'Beauty, no!' said Mr. Wilkins. 'What do I want with a thing as looks as if it was pulled out of a rope of onions; and very likely was. He's an old fool. And yet Ned Scate is going to do business with him, isn't he?'

I could make no reply for the moment, the man's vulgar familiarity, and his knowledge of Scate's plans, so thoroughly staggered me.

'But a regular fool will suit Ned Scate better than anything else, especially if he has a good opinion of himself,' continued Mr. Wilkins not heeding my silence. 'Well, governor, there's the stuff, and I want five-and-forty pounds of you.'

'Yes,' I said; 'Mr. Scate told me I was to give you forty-five pounds; and as for a receipt—'

'Well, then, hand over the cash, and let me step it,' interrupted the man. 'What's the use of keeping the cab at the door? Ned Scate never told you to ask for a receipt, I know.' A moment's pause here, while he rapidly ran over the gold. 'All right, governor. Will you come to the corner and have a glass?—You won't? Well, that's your business. Mine is to clear out; so good-night.' Saying this, he went, leaving me with a growing feeling of dislike to the 'agency,' with which indeed I had never been greatly enamoured.

Mr. Chelms, who, as he explained, had gone out for a short stroll, returned soon after Wilkins left, and joining Mrs. Matley and myself, began what promised to be a long, as it was certainly an unconnected account of his gardening experiences in the country; but ere he was fairly in the midst of his narrative, a knock at the street door was heard; and, to my astonishment, Lizzie brought down a message to the effect that a gentleman wished to see me at the *Three Bells*, a tavern in the next street. It immediately occurred to me that it must be that dreadful Wilkins, who wished to transact some fresh piece of the most irregular business in which I was engaged, and this was perhaps his way of managing it. I hurried off accordingly. Mr. Chelms saying he would smoke a pipe in the front garden until I came back, so that he should be out of the way while Mrs. Matley and Lizzie prepared the supper.

I hastened away, as I have said, and went into each compartment of the bar at the *Three Bells*, which was a large place, without seeing Wilkins or any one that I knew. On my looking for the second or third time into the most select division, where I had naturally expected to find him, a big, square-built man, a customer who was leaning against the bar, said civilly: 'Are you looking for anybody, sir?'

It occurred to me that this after all might be the sender of the message, so at a venture, I replied: 'Yes; I am indeed looking for some one; but the awkward part of it is that I do not know who I am looking for. A lad came to my house, and said a gentleman wished to see me here; but I think there must have been some mistake.'

'I am sure there is!' exclaimed the stranger. 'What a pity it is you cannot get the simplest thing done in a straightforward manner. I sent a boy with that message to an old acquaintance.—May I ask where you live, sir?'

'No. 9 Victoria Louisa Terrace,' I replied.

'The young idiot!' said the stranger. 'I told him a totally different number. It is evidently through me you have been brought here, sir; and though I did not come myself, I must apologise for the utter stupidity of my messenger. You must have a glass of something with me.'

I tried to decline this; but the stranger was clearly one of those who think nothing is complete until ratified by the wine-pledge, or what serves in modern life for the wine-pledge; so I had to stay and assure him of my completely excusing him, and listen to his repeated apologies over a glass of ale, before I could get away.

I found Mr. Chelms leaning over the gate, and smoking tranquilly. When I told him of my adventures, the old gentleman laughed heartily. I thought business was concluded for that evening; but at the very last moment, just indeed as we were going to bed, Scate came in for the parcel left by Mr. Jerry Wilkins. I went with him into the office, where I experienced a momentary 'turn' by not being able to lay my hand upon the packet in the dark, which I made sure I could have done. On procuring a light, however, I found I had merely made the mistake of supposing that the parcel was on a chair to the right of the door, when in reality it was upon one to the left.

'I shall be round early to-morrow,' said Mr. Scate, 'as, since I saw you, I have had a foreign letter, which you must answer. It is from Belgium, and will lead to a great deal of business. You understand French, I believe?'

I said I had a fair knowledge of that language.

'That's a good job,' continued Scate. 'It has been a staggerer to me over and over again, the not knowing anything of the *parlyvoo* jargon. This will be a big transaction, you will find.—And I say, Matley!—this exclamation was uttered just as he reached the door, as if it were a sudden thought.—'just sound old Chelms about his money. If he can get it in two or three days, it will be just in time to make such a profit for him as he never got in Australia, or wherever he has been. Tell him that; and tell him that afterwards it may be too late. I will come round and see him myself as well.'

He went rapidly away with the parcel; and I had a long talk with my wife, before I went to sleep that night, upon the singular features of the employment on which I had entered; and we half decided that unless I saw the principals at the end of the month, and liked them when I did see them, I would not continue the engagement.

I spoke to Mr. Chelms in the morning, as desired

about his investment; and the old gentleman seemed anxious not to lose the promised chance, and said that perhaps, by sacrificing a trifle of interest, he might get his money a day or two earlier than agreed, which would be in about a week later. Perhaps Mr Scate could show him a way out of the difficulty. But it was not likely that he should give up all this money without an introduction to the firm, and being well satisfied of their stability, or, in lieu of this, some tangible security meanwhile.

As soon as Mr Scate came, I told him this. He declared he greatly applauded the old gentleman's caution, and asked me to call him down, that we might talk things over. I did so; and Mr Chelps came at once.

'You are naturally desirous of knowing where you put your money, and what it is for,' Mr Chelps'—began Scate.

'I am, sir, naturally anxious, as you say,' interposed the old gentleman, feeling for his eyeglass, as he always did when business was the topic of conversation. Seizing it at last, he fixed it to his eyes, and looked earnestly, yet with an expression which was ridiculously helpless, at Mr Scate. 'No offence, I hope,' he continued; 'but you see a thousand pounds, or eleven hundred, is a great deal to me; and although I have every confidence in you, yet'—

'No apology, my dear sir,' exclaimed Scate; 'your conduct is strictly business-like, and I will satisfy you. One of my principals, if not two of them, shall wait upon you here, in the first place.'

'Oh, I'm sure I would not trouble them so far,' said Mr Chelps.

But Scate interrupted him, and went on with the same boastful swaggering air: 'They shall come, sir; and you shall arrange then, if you like each other, for a final interview at headquarters. Their references,—I may remark, will be to three tolerably well-known establishments—the Bank of England, sir; Baring's, sir; and Rothschild's, sir. Are they good enough?'

'Splendid! Oh! I'm sure,' commenced Mr Chelps; but here his eyeglass fell down, and the interruption gave Scate an opportunity of going on.

'It is possible, Mr Chelps,' he said, 'that the Belgian transaction I have spoken of may be finished before you can arrange with my principals, unless you can have your money at once. In fact, I know this will be the case. Mr Matley, who is luckily a capital French scholar, has written this morning a formal acceptance of these foreigners' terms. They will telegraph to their agent, who will be here on the third day from this with the dock-notes of the goods, which are lying here. I have already seen my principals to-day, and took upon me to say—being anxious to forward your wishes—that I could have your money by that time. Accordingly, as the total required will be sixteen hundred pounds, they handed me five hundred pounds in notes. Here they are.' He pulled out a bulky pocket-book as he said this. 'They are strictly ready-money people, as I told you.'

'What! the Belgians?' exclaimed Chelps, whose eyes sparkled at the sight of the rustling notes. 'And what are their names?'

'I did not mean them exactly,' returned Scate.

'I meant that my people were ready-money men; but so, for the matter of that, are Belgians, especially when they are selling anything. Their names are Delroi, Vianet, and Company. You may have heard of them?'

'Yes; I think I have heard of them,' said Chelps. 'And are all those bank-notes?' His interest in the Belgian firm was evidently small compared with his interest in bank-notes, from which he had never taken his eyes since Scate produced them.

'Yes; fifty tens. Look at 'em!' replied the latter, passing the notes towards the old gentleman, and once again shaking down the eyeglass. 'Well, sir,' continued Scate after a moment's pause, during which the notes had been handed back again, 'you shall have the delivery-order of these goods as security, until you are quite satisfied about my principals; and that is exactly equal to giving you five hundred pounds of their money to hold without any security at all.'

'So it is—so it is!' chuckled Chelps. 'Nothing could be better. I will go into the City, sir, and sell out to-day. My broker will let me have the money in advance if I like. Oh, I can manage all that; and I shall be quite satisfied, especially if I can see one of the firm; I must own I should like that.'

'You shall do so, sir,' answered Scate. 'One of them shall be here to see the completion of the transaction. He will like to do so, being Mr Matley's first piece of business on their account. Then, sir, in his presence, I will give you the dock-warrants, and you will give me eleven hundred pounds. I may say, as between friends, that these things are already as good as sold for two thousand pounds. There's business, sir. Our firm knows where to plant the articles.'

'My dear sir,' exclaimed Chelps, 'it's as good as done. If I had any doubts before, what you now say, and the sight of those notes, have quite removed them, and I shall not be easy now until I have had the pleasure of seeing you and your friend together.'

Mr Scate shook his hand heartily, restored the notes to his pocket-book, took the letter I had written; and then, after a most expressive wink at me, which implied anything but respect for his new partner, he left.

AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE.

Of all the various races of the west coast of Africa, the Boobies, or natives of the beautiful, but to Europeans, fatal island of Fernando Po, in the Gulf of Benin, are among the most remarkable, on account of the difference in the appearance, habits, and manners of these people from those of the races or tribes of the adjacent mainland. Finely formed, with, as a general rule, not strongly marked African-negro features, they voluntarily disfigure—or ornament themselves?—by tattooing on their approach towards manhood—not with the regular lines and figures with which the South Sea Islanders and others adorn their persons, but with deep hideous gashes, which open widely, and leave frightful cicatrices on their faces and breasts. It would appear that those who are most deeply marked with this hideous

tattooing are regarded with the greatest respect by the people of the tribe; and though they seem to live on terms of perfect social equality, it is probable that this disfigurement is in some degree a sign of chieftainship.

In one respect, however, these strange people are less civilised than any other negro race, inasmuch as they go absolutely destitute of clothing. They will sometimes wear old garments, given to them by sailors or others, especially if these garments be showy, but only as an occasional adornment which is irksome to them. The only article of apparel that is constantly worn is a hat, or rather a flat, circular piece of grass-matting, like the crown of a hat, but of larger circumference, which is fixed on the top of their woolly heads, to keep off the fierce rays of the sun. As a substitute for clothing, however, the Boobies—male and female—habitually cover their bodies from head to foot with palm-oil, coloured with a kind of red ochre, which abounds on the island, and which stains the skin, and even the woolly hair, of a bright yellowish red or bronze colour, and gives them the appearance, when standing motionless a short distance off, of so many bronze statues. It also serves the purpose of keeping off the mosquitoes and sand-flies and other venomous insects.

Fernando Po is an earthly paradise to look upon; and though fever is prevalent and often fatal in the settlement of Clarence, the interior, where the native villages are generally situated, is said to be healthy. The island, which is nearly circular, is about thirty miles in diameter, and densely wooded from its shores to the lofty mountain—between seven and eight thousand feet in height, according to estimate—which rises in its centre.

One day, while our ship was at anchor in Clarence Bay, a party of seven or eight was formed by the second-lieutenant, to visit the interior, and penetrate, if possible, to the foot of the mountain. The present writer was one of the party, and we set forth early in the morning immediately after breakfast. There was little difficulty about travelling in mid-day, for our journey would lead us through a dense forest, almost impervious to the sun's rays, the whole distance we purposed to travel. We were recommended to arm ourselves, in case any difficulty should arise, and most of us carried a revolver, concealed of course. We were curious to see the habitations of the natives; for though there were a few negro huts of the ordinary description in the vicinity of the settlement, these were chiefly inhabited by coast negroes, who had taken up their abode on the island, and were hangers-on upon the white residents. The Boobie villages were all in the interior, and we had been told that they were curiosities in their way. It was in the direction of one of the most populous villages that we set forth, plunging into the wood as soon as we quitted the settlement.

Nothing remarkable occurred during the journey, except that we passed several enormous trees of the mahogany species, and saw a few small monkeys, which clung by their tails to the branches of the trees, and swinging to and fro, chattered volubly as we passed beneath them. Neither did we meet a single negro until we

had journeyed three or four miles, when we came upon a party of young men collecting palm-wine in the palm-trees, from which, when they perceived us approaching, they descended with incredible and, as it appeared to us, dangerous swiftness, and scampered off, hallooing to one another, in the direction of the village.

As we walked slowly, it was near mid-day before we approached the base of the mountain; and very soon the chattering of many voices told us that we were near the village. However, we kept on following the direction of the voices, and in a few minutes saw a party of eighteen or twenty men, who came towards us, headed by a man bent with years, who leaned heavily upon a stout stick as he walked. The young men who had run away on seeing us, had no doubt carried the news of our approach to the people of the village; and this deputation, headed by the venerable senior, had come forth to ascertain the object of our visit.

We were in somewhat of a dilemma. None of us could speak a word of the Boobie language; nor could any of the negroes on board, or we should have brought one of them to serve as an interpreter; and except a certain formula of words, which they had learned from the sailors, and which it is unnecessary to repeat—though the old man and some of the others uttered them over and over again, evidently thinking they were greeting us most politely—the deputation knew nothing of English. It was ludicrous to see the poor fellows bowing, and waving their hands in token of amity—evidently doubtful of our object in coming to their village, and deprecating any unfriendly act on our part—and at the same time swearing at us in most approved nautical formula, until the second-lieutenant, smiling, shook hands with the old man and swore at him in return; upon which a general shaking of hands and swearing ensued, and the party seemed satisfied that we had no evil intent in visiting them.

The old man then issued some orders; and several boys appeared, bringing palm-wine in gourds, with cocoa-nut cups to drink it from, and bananas and plantains and other fruits, which they pressed upon our acceptance. We, however, wished to enter the village, which, as we perceived by advancing a few steps, was close to us, and consisted of some dozen small low huts, and a vast number of the large but light bark canoes, suspended, bottom upwards, from tree to tree, beneath which some old men were squatted. We could see neither women nor children, though, when we first drew near, we could distinctly hear their shrill voices in loud outcry. They had apparently taken alarm at our approach; and the men were evidently so unwilling that we should enter their village, though they did not offer to use force to prevent us from so doing, that as we had no desire to offend their prejudices, and, moreover, as we could see all that was to be seen from where we stood, we gave way, and sat ourselves down to rest and partake of the refreshments they had provided. They seemed pleased at this; and after resting awhile, we took our departure, with a mutual exchange of the formula with which our friends had greeted our arrival, leaving the

old man and one or two others, who appeared to possess some authority, highly delighted with a present of old cotton handkerchiefs, a few small silver coins, and a few 'hands' of leaf-tobacco. We returned to the sloop-of-war shortly before dark, and had hardly set foot on board when we saw a double-banked war-canoe approaching the ship from the mainland.

This was an unexpected visit. The 'double-banked canoes' are formed of two huge trunks of trees—generally a species of mahogany—carefully and neatly hollowed out, until the shell, though of great strength, is often thinner than the sides of an ordinary boat. The outsides as well as the insides are smoothed and polished with palm-oil mixed with some pigment; and the hollowing is so contrived that the bow and stern of each canoe are much higher than the centre. The stern and bows are also elaborately carved, the former especially; and the two canoes are then bound firmly together, so that it is almost impossible to capsize them in the roughest sea. The paddlers, from twenty to forty in number, squat cross-legged on the bottom of the canoes, there being no stretchers, except across and around the stern; and the paddles are shaped like small spades, with short handles. Rapidly wielded, with short quick strokes or dips, the paddlers chanting some monotonous song the while, these canoes are forced swiftly over the water. But they are never used except by some high chief going to war or on some important mission.

There were two figures clothed in white in the stern of this canoe, both evidently chiefs, although we had no idea to what race or tribe they belonged, or what was their object in visiting the sloop-of-war. A few minutes, however, brought the canoe alongside, and the chiefs ascended to the ship's deck. Both were tall stout men, and they really presented an imposing appearance in their ample white robes. Our visitors were of a jet-black complexion, their skins shining like polished ebony. Both were good-looking negroes. He who appeared to have chief authority wore a short beard, and his nose, though the nostrils were distended, was slightly aquiline. Their long white calico robes, worn somewhat in the style of a Scotch plaid, reached to the calves of their legs behind, but left the right knee bare in front, while the robe descended a few inches below the left knee. It was doubled across the breast, and one end was thrown gracefully over the left shoulder; and though it had no sleeves in reality, it was so arranged that the arms, bare to the elbows, seemed to be thrust through wide bishop-sleeves, which hung drooping at their sides. Both wore a white head-dress, somewhat resembling a Turkish turban, with a long and flowing flap behind, to shade the sun from the neck. The headman's turban was larger than that of his companion, and more profusely ornamented with gold spangles and strings of cowrie-shells; but each wore heavy gold bracelets and anklets, and a crooked sword or scimitar, without a sheath, attached to a belt round the waist. Their feet and legs below the knees were bare; and as they stood erect—the shorter of the two at least six feet in height—they presented both a stately and graceful appearance.

The chief who spoke English, after saluting

the captain and officers, explained that they had come from the coast to the northward, pointing in that direction, and mentioning some unpronounceable name.

'Me, de king broder,' he went on. 'De king good fren' to Queen Victoria [this name he pronounced correctly]; king and queen should be good fren'—dat berry good ting. Den no war. Ebery ting go right. Queen Victoria say hab no mo' slabe. Send him ship for entchem slabe-ship. Makee custom to coast-king for no sell slabe to bad white fellar. Dat berry good too. But bad king, he takee custom, sell slabe all same. Dat no good. Dis berry time, on de coast dar, t'oder side ob de Cape [meaning Cape Biafra], two ships go takee slabe on board, what king go for sell. Messenger come across for tell de king, my broder. 'S'pose man-o'-war ship go, makee quick time, den dey catch him bo't—all right.'

The chief mentioned the names of the tribe and king to whom he alluded; but I have forgotten both. Our captain, however, was doubtful whether to act upon such intelligence. That it was true, he thought, was very probable; and it was well known that from no love of Queen Victoria, but from hatred and jealousy of one another, the kings and chiefs of one tribe would inform against another, with the treble object of gratifying their own animosity, affecting a regard for her Britannic Majesty and the treaty, and reaping a reward for the information in case a capture should be made.

It was certainly a great object to capture two slavers; and that the slavers were on the coast there was little doubt. The question was, in the first place, whether we should be able to find them—the geographical knowledge of the natives not being very accurate, and whether they would not be off before we could arrive at the designated spot; and in the second place, whether it might not be a ruse to draw us off from the station, that the king and chiefs who professed so much friendship for Queen Victoria, might meanwhile play a little game to their own advantage; such tricks being by no means unfrequent.

'Can I be sure that you are telling me the truth?' said the captain. 'And can I find the river of which you speak, from the vague description you have given, if your information be correct?'

'Tis de truf, sah, captain,' replied the chief. 'Me makee know de coast right well, s'pose me see him.'

'Then you will act as our pilot, and get good "custom," suppose we make a capture?'

Somewhat to our surprise, the chief readily offered to stay on board and pilot the ship, or rather point out the river in which the slavers lay, when the ship should arrive off that part of the coast.

Still suspecting some trick from this very promptness, and thinking it possible that, after all, the chief who had not spoken might be the real headman and the king's brother, the captain insisted that both the chiefs should remain on board, he promising to bring them back again to Fernando Po. This, after some little hesitation, they agreed to; and no longer doubtful, the captain ordered the anchor to be weighed and

sail set immediately. The chiefs gave some orders to their own people, and the canoe was paddled away; and in less than half an hour the ship was under full sail, standing out of the Bay before the land-breeze.

Shortly before dark the next day, we reached the spot indicated by the chief, who pointed out the entrance of a narrow winding river, in which, he said, the messenger who had crossed overland, declared that the slavers were lying. It was necessary to cut the vessels out by means of a night-attack with boats, or to await their coming out of the river and capture them; but then, in the latter case, they would be sure to hear of our presence, and to come out without slaves, and probably laden with some trifling cargo, like honest traders, in which case we could do nothing with them; so, though the former plan was hazardous, it was decided upon.

As soon as darkness set fairly in, the pinnace and first-cutter were armed and manned and despatched up the river, one of the chiefs accompanying each boat. The river was very winding, and so narrow that there was often hardly room to pull the oars. It was evident that the vessels must be small and of light draught, and must have been towed up the river, if they were really there, which we began to doubt. The night was very dark. The shores were marshy in some places, in others lined with dense forest, and as we pulled silently along, the muffled oars making no noise, and no one speaking, save when the officers gave some order in a scarcely audible whisper, while the night-wind sighed mournfully amidst the trees, the scene was dismal enough. For a full hour we had pulled in this fashion, hoping, at every fresh bend in the river, to discover the vessels of which we were in search, yet seeing nothing; and at last the officer in command was inclined to return.

'They have never been here, or they are gone,' he whispered.

'Pull hilly bit more, sah, you catch 'em,' replied the chief.

'I think I see a vessel's masts, sir—there, just against that streak of light in the sky,' whispered the bow-oar's-man, who had been ordered to look out.

'Yes; it is so,' answered the lieutenant.—'Now, my lads, have your pistols ready; but don't fire, unless we are fired upon. Be ready with your cutlasses. The vessels lie in the next bend. We'll pull softly round, and then dash alongside.'

The cutter was in the rear. The pinnace lay by till she came up, and the same orders were repeated to the officer in charge.

Silently we pulled round the point. Every man held his breath, though he panted with excitement. Five minutes more, and we descried the hulls and spars of two long low schooners, scarcely a hundred yards before us. The boats appeared to be unseen and unheard.

'They don't see or hear us,' whispered the lieutenant. 'We'll pull softly up, and board them in the dark. They've no idea that there's a man-of-war on the coast, and we will catch the scoundrels sleeping.'

We were not fifty yards from the vessels, which lay side by side, in a sort of basin in the river, which widened in this spot to a breadth of

forty or fifty yards. The stars had made their appearance in the hitherto gloomy sky, and we could clearly discern the slave pens and huts on shore.

'Hist! hark! What is that?' whispered the lieutenant. 'By Jove! they see us! Look! There is a light on board the starboard vessel. On, my lads! Dash in, with a cheer!' he cried aloud. 'Huzza for prize-money!'

Hardly had he spoken the words, when there came a blinding flash, followed by the simultaneous report of at least a dozen muskets. We heard the bullets plash in the water, like heavy rain; but no one appeared to have been hit.

'On, my lads! No secrecy now. No quarter till they surrender!' cried the lieutenant.

In a few moments both boats were alongside the schooners, and the sailors sprang, cutlass in hand, on to their decks.

'Surrender, in the Queen's name!' cried the lieutenant in command.

'We surrender!' answered a voice, in broken English, which, however, to my fancy, had a very Yankified accent. There was no further attempt at resistance, which, in fact, had been madness, for they well knew the boats would not have made the attack unless they were well supported outside, and resistance to a ship-of-war was punishable by death, while otherwise, the vessels only would be seized.

The prizes were ours; and they were sent to St Helena for adjudication, where they were very profitably sold for the benefit of the captors. The slaves, four hundred and thirty in number, were in the pens on shore, and they were sent to Liberia, and there released, to become denizens of that then new republic.

'How dared you fire at Her Majesty's boats at all?' demanded the lieutenant.

'It was not I, but the fool of an officer on deck,' replied the captain, who, though I veritably believe he was an American, professed to be a Portuguese.

'Lucky for you, no harm was done,' was the reply.

There was mischief done, however, though at the time no one was aware of it. It was determined to send one boat back to the ship, and to keep the other, the pinnace, alongside till daylight, and the crew were ordered out of her. The men had got into the boat again, expecting to return to the ship, and they returned to the schooner, at the command of the officer—all but one. That one was the second chief, who had never stirred from his seat in the pinnace. There he still sat, in his white garb, erect and silent.

'Come up out of the boat!' repeated the officer.

Still the chief never stirred.

'Ask the fellow why he does not come out of the boat!' said the officer to one of the sailors.

The man shook him roughly by the shoulder, and told him to mount to the deck. The hitherto erect body fell over on its side.

'Ah, sir, the nigger's shot dead,' said the sailor. 'There's blood runnin' from his breast, and stainin' his white dress.'

'Is it possible?' exclaimed the lieutenant, hastening into the boat.

A very cursory examination told that such

was the case. Conspicuous in his white robe, the poor fellow, who was in the foremost boat, had made a good mark for the men on board the slaver, and a bullet had entered his breast, killing him instantly.

This was the only casualty we met with in capturing the most profitable prize we secured during our cruise; and as it did not befall one of our own men, it was not charged against the captains of the slavers, who got off with the loss of their vessels and all the property on board.

At the earnest request of the head chief, however, who was deeply grieved at the death of his companion, the body was taken on board the ship and sent back to the country to which the unfortunate negro belonged. The sloop-of-war, however, did not return immediately; and the chief, with the reward he had earned and the dead body of his friend, returned home in another vessel.

SOME MODERN CHANGES.

THAT fashions should constantly alter, is not only an inevitable, but probably a desirable thing; the progressive waves of varying style and usage that are continually passing over everything within the scope of human affairs, from petticoats to politics, are to the world, in preserving it from stagnation, what the tides are to the sea; and however much we may grumble at the eccentricity or extravagance of any prevailing mode, we must remember that habitude makes all things tolerable, and that the fashion which we now dislike to change, and uphold from custom, appeared just as absurd and undesirable to our forerunners, when it superseded something else, as the new one does to us. The consideration of such changes as these, however, not being within the scope of the present paper—it is difficult, indeed, to imagine any paper which would afford scope for them!—we shall glance only at a few of those alterations affecting the minutiae of daily life, which, trifling in themselves, and scarcely appreciable in the individual, when taken as a whole, sometimes serve to mark the strides of civilisation, or even in some instances, the retrogression of nations.

Let us start with that most commonplace object, a tallow-candle—so useful, and yet so vulgar compared with the sperm, ozokerit, stearine, composite, and other beautiful varieties of our own day. Where are the farthing dips and the 'long sixteens' of our youth? Well, we shall breathe no sigh of regret for them; peace be to their ashes, or rather their 'snuffs,' which were malodorous, productive of conflagrations, and exigent of constant trimming. And this last item brings us to the point—where are all the snuffers gone? It is only a few years since the snuffers-tray appeared regularly with the candles at nightfall; now they are never seen, and ten years hence will be as rare and as valuable as Queen Anne's farthings, unless some specimens are preserved in our museums. As modern candles consume their own wicks, snuffers have become things of the past, and the fact of their

desuetude marks an important epoch in the progress of a great manufacture, which, by its exports and imports, not only visibly affects our revenues, but exercises considerable influence in our commercial relationship with the countries from which tallow was derived.

Who now possesses a tinder-box, or one of the old flare-up dipping-match and bottle arrangements? If there be any such among the readers of this paper, we would say with emphasis: Keep them, and hand them down to your children's children, as an heirloom precious above rubies; for when rubies are manufactured by the pound, and original sculptures of Grecian and Babylonian antiquity supplied wholesale by Birmingham houses at so much a ton, these things will be known only in the dim traditions of our race. Blue-blazing, ill-smelling, sputtering, suffocating phosphorus and sulphur matches, in their red and blue boxes, are rapidly becoming ingulfed in the abyss of forgotten things too. We have read the details of Messrs Bryant and May's manufactory, of their enormous consumption of wood, paper, metal, and other materials, and are not certain that one species of tree is not supposed by botanists to be approaching extinction, owing to the magnitude of their operations! A watch-key will, after a time, become an interesting curiosity, and be transmitted to posterity as evidence of those dark ages when keyless watches were not in universal use. And what—oh, whatever will future generations think of a warming-pan! already at the present day seen only in the hands of the Clown in Christmas pantomimes, and by him employed as a weapon of offence. Let us trust that our descendants may be oblivious of any other purpose which the hideous article could serve, and that a fossil clown with an ancient warming-pan may be dug up somewhere or other for their edification. For, whatever its utility may have been at a bygone period, is not the survival of such an atrocity now an insult to an age of india-rubber, to a land flowing with elastic hot-water bottles, pillows, cushions, and beds—to an era of æsthetic comfort—to the days of well-built houses, well-fitting window-sashes, impermeable roofs, decent drainage, and damp-excluding doors, of bedroom fires, and eider-down quilts?

Great simplification has been effected of late years in our appliances for writing; but there is room for much more. The most ordinary incident of our every-day business, that of writing a letter, is perhaps more cumbrous and complicated in its necessary arrangements than anything else coming within the pale of that civilisation which, like charity, should begin at home. The pen, the penholder, the ink and inkstand, the blotting-paper, the sealing-wax occasionally, and postage-stamp—surely, it is high time that some of these were consigned to the limbo whither the sandbox has already departed, and wafers are fast going. Stylographic pens are a step in the right direction; but perhaps some better kind of indelible pencil than those which already exist would be more fitted to answer the requirements of calligraphic man.

The snuff-box, with all its historical and classical associations, is doomed; and 'collections' of those articles are even now to be met with in the

possession of people whose particular fancy it is to establish private museums of different things. It is curious to note that the snuff-box, so frequently placed in the hands of their *dramatis personæ* by the playwrights of the last century, and to which they make constant verbal allusion, has but a poor successor in the pipe, cigar, or other accessory of nicotine worship, in the favour of modern writers. The fact is, the use of the box by a skilful actor might be variously rendered playful, cynical, sly, graceful, or statuesque—might, in fact, be employed to interpret many emotions; while the amusing *contretemps* to be extracted from it were innumerable.

Smoking, on the other hand, admits of much fewer phases of expression; and if there is any situation in which the most dignified of mankind appears at a greater disadvantage than when looking in the glass at himself while shaving, it is in the act of lighting a pipe or cigar and squinting at the match. At the same time we can hardly think that the pipe will ever fall out of fashion among smokers, as the medium through which they derive comfort from their favourite weed; though great changes in form and material may take place. Cigars, also, it may be remarked, are daily coming into vogue to a greater extent than ever. Nor is this gradual increase confined to England alone. Germany and Turkey consume more cigarettes and cigars every year; and a large exporter of meerschaum from the former country assures us that the trade in expensive pipes has decreased nearly one-half during the last ten years, while wood and clay still hold their ground.

The tobacco-trade, possibly, has more mysteries than any other in this age of commercial immorality. It is almost as difficult to purchase a good cigar promiscuously in Havana as it is in London; unless you know the right shop to go to, you are as likely to buy Whitechapel and Bremen abominations, exported from Europe for the purpose, and put up in the most orthodox 'Habana' boxes. In Vera Cruz, you may buy cigars for five shillings a hundred, which the vendors for a few cents extra will pack and label with the name of some famous brand. So they will in Porto Plata or San Domingo. So they used in Brazil; but Bahian and other Brazilian cigars have now made their own name, and have established an honourable claim to be considered amongst the best cheap cigars in the world. It is impossible to get an inexpensive good cigar in Cuba itself; the best brands are never exported, for few people here would care to give half-a-crown or three shillings apiece for their 'smokes,' which the wealthy Cuban—who consumes them soft and green, wrapping them in oiled silk to preserve the flavour—pays on the spot. There is much in a name. Thousands of really excellent weeds are made yearly both in England and Germany from good raw tobacco imported for the purpose; but it would never do to offer them for sale as British or German produce. What a charm lies in the words 'Vuelta Abajo,' to be read on your cigar-boxes! Vuelta Abajo is a small district between Havana and Santiago, consisting of a few acres of land only, now in the possession of two or three of the richest planters in the island; and probably not an atom of the tobacco—noted for its richness—which is grown there finds its way

beyond their own air-tight bladder cigar-pouches, or those of their intimate friends.

Throughout the whole of South and Central America, the Southern States, and in many other parts of the globe, it may safely be averred that the majority of the male population of all classes have a cigarette between their lips during the greater part of their waking existence from childhood upwards. The senator smokes in the Chamber of Debates; the servant smokes as he waits upon you; the shopman does not trouble himself to remove the smouldering rice-paper from his mouth as he answers your queries; the coachman who drives you, the half-clad nigger who blacks your boots, the hunter on the prairie or pampa, and the Indian in the backwoods who rolls his morsel of tobacco in a maize-leaf—all smoke cigarettes. We visited one huge manufactory in Havana which stands out into the bay like an immense mahogany cigar-box itself, where over a million cigarettes are turned out daily. We entered our names in a book, on admission; and when we had completed the tour of the factory, were each presented with an elegant case of cigarettes, every bundle of which bore our respective names, the date, and a complimentary sentence in Spanish, printed in different styles on beautifully embossed labels. There can be no doubt that the introduction of tobacco in this form has greatly increased its consumption in this country. A cigarette is a thing that can be lighted or tossed aside at any time, and often serves to fill up odd intervals of a few minutes; while a pipe, as a rule, demands premeditation, and is indulged in only at regular periods; and a cigar—especially a good one—is rarely commenced by one who can appreciate it, except under circumstances favourable for its full enjoyment and completion.

CHILD SONGS—THE LITTLE PRUDE.

HERE she comes, her nut-brown eyes
Downcast, but slyly peeping.
Oh! beware;
Such a snare
Must never find you sleeping.

She puts her finger in a mouth
Where butter would not melt away,
With an air
As if she were
Much too shy for 'Yea' or 'Nay.'

'How do you do, my little maid?'
(Her silence is so pretty).
'To lose your tongue
Is very wrong,
And to my mind a pity.'

Up she comes to me quite close,
Shoots a glance, that never misses,
With a smile
All the while,
Whispers: 'There must be no kisses.'

T. P.

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THE RAIN-BAND.

THE spectroscope is one of the most distinctive of modern wonder-workers. In its essentials, it is based on a simple natural phenomenon. When a ray of daylight enters a darkened room through a small hole, it gives an image of the sun on the opposite wall. If a prism—or three-sided piece of glass—is placed, apex upwards, so as to intercept the ray of light between the aperture and the wall, the image of the sun disappears, but is replaced further down the wall by an elongated upright figure, termed the spectrum, and consisting of bands of different colours, beginning with red at the upper extremity, and ending with violet at the lower. These colour-bands are due to the fact that the original ray of white light in passing through the prism has been analysed into the different coloured rays of which such light consists. The spectro-scope, therefore, is an instrument by the aid of which spectral phenomena, such as the above, may be studied. It consists essentially of, first, a narrow slit, through which the parallel rays of light pass; secondly, a prism or train of prisms, to separate the coloured or differently refrangible portions of these rays; and thirdly, a telescope, to form a magnified image of the spectrum produced. Newton effected a sevenfold division of the colours in the spectrum above described; and Wollaston and Fraunhofer, at a later period, made great advances in the use of the instrument, especially for chemical analysis, till now it is possible to tell, by the dark absorption lines which the instrument shows interspersed throughout the coloured band, the nature of the gases of which the luminous envelopes of the sun and even the stars consist.

Early in the present century, when Fraunhofer was studying these lines in the solar spectrum, which Wollaston had first observed, he made an important discovery. Examining the sunlight under various circumstances, he found a peculiarity in its spectrum when the sun is near the horizon. He detected the presence of

dark lines, in fact, which are absent in the spectrum of a mid-day sun. Now, a moment's reflection shows us that the sunlight has to pass through a thicker layer of atmosphere when the luminary is close to the horizon than when he is overhead. What more natural than to ascribe the extra lines to this additional thickness of air? Without knowing at that time anything of the nature or cause of the lines, scientific men regarded them as of atmospheric origin.

After the true interpretation of the dark (or absorption) lines had been indicated by various physicists, Brewster and Gladstone, in 1860, again took up the subject of these atmospheric lines—sometimes called the *telluric* lines, because of their terrestrial origin; and in order to demonstrate their existence, prepared a map of the solar spectrum containing more than two thousand of the dark lines. A considerable number of these apparently owed their presence to atmospheric influences. Professor Cooke, of America, next investigated the matter, and found that many of the lines are dependent upon the relative moistness of the air, being stronger when the air is humid than when it is dry. The indications of the hygrometer accordingly showed a marked agreement with the strength of the bands in the spectrum.

In 1864, Janssen revised the whole question. His interesting researches are thus described by Mr Proctor in his little book on *The Spectroscope and its Work*: 'Janssen, using a spectroscope with five prisms, succeeded in resolving the dark bands seen by Brewster and Gladstone into fine lines, and ascertained that these lines vary in strength. They are darkest at sunrise and sunset, and weakest—but never entirely absent—at noon. Observing next from the summit of the Faulhorn, about nine thousand feet above the sea-level, he found that these lines were still further reduced in strength. In order to ascertain whether they are entirely due to our atmosphere, he caused large pine-fires to be made at Geneva, about thirteen miles from the Faulhorn, and observed the spectrum of the flame. As he found that

some of the dark lines were seen which are observed in the spectrum of the setting sun, it was proved that these lines are caused by our own air. To ascertain next what part the aqueous vapour has in producing them, he made use of an iron cylinder one hundred and eighteen feet long, placed at his disposal by the Paris Gas Company. After exhausting it of air by forcing steam through it, he filled it with steam, and closed both ends by pieces of strong plate-glass. A bright flame—produced by sixteen gas-burners—was placed at one end of the cylinder, and analysed by means of a spectroscope placed at the other end. The light, after thus travelling through one hundred and eighteen feet of aqueous vapour, gave a spectrum crossed by groups of dark lines corresponding to those seen in the spectrum of the horizontal sun. Janssen proved, indeed, in this manner that almost all the lines then seen are due to aqueous vapour. To make assurance doubly sure, he extended his observations to the fixed stars, to see if similar lines appear in their spectra. The results of his observations of these spectra accorded well with those he had already obtained.

No further interest seems to have been taken in the subject until, in 1872, the attention of Professor Piazzi Smyth was drawn to it. Since then, he has been a devoted student of what is termed Rain-band spectroscopy, and has published the results of his observations. In the beginning of September 1882, he based a prediction—published in the *Scotsman*—of a spell of fine harvest-weather upon the exceptional faintness of the rain-band at that time. The prediction was borne out; and its success gave rise to a controversy in *The Times* regarding the predictive value of the rain-band spectroscope. Popular interest having been thus aroused, the importance of meteorological spectroscopy has of late become as greatly magnified as it was before depreciated. The public, too, unwilling to believe that they have so long deprived themselves of a good thing, persist in believing that this application of the spectroscope is a new and startling discovery. To correct the latter notion, we have given a summary of the rain-band's history. To correct the former also, we purpose briefly discussing its real value.

It must be remembered, to begin with, that the strength of the rain-band does not afford any clue to the approaching *weather*, but only to the wet or dry element in it. This statement is here made because not a few people seem to imagine that the spectroscope is to supersede the barometer. It may form a useful adjunct to that venerable instrument, but can never supersede it. The barometer measures *pressure*, the rain-band indicates *humidity*.

As may have been gathered from the description of Janssen's experiments, what the spectroscope really does is to indicate the degree of moisture—the quantity of water-vapour or 'raw material'

of rain—in any section of the atmosphere from the vertical nearly to the horizontal. If there be a great deal of the water-vapour present, there is a presumption that some of it will come down; if there be very little, there is a likelihood of dry weather simply because the rain material is not there. So much is certain. But mark what is uncertain. The rain-band might correctly indicate much water-vapour, yet the temperature conditions which follow the observation be such as to favour continued suspension, and no precipitation (rain) take place for days. The temperature, on the other hand, might suddenly be reduced, and a downpour occur within an hour's time. Again, the wind might bear away the vapour to some other locality, and so prevent any precipitation at all at the place of observation. Then the faintness of the rain-band might show the presence of very little water-vapour, yet the deficiency be quickly supplied by a moisture-laden current of air, with rain following in an hour or two. These chances of error, it will be seen, somewhat limit the utility of the spectroscope as a weather prognosticator.

Still, there is no doubt that in the hands of an intelligent observer, the 'rain-band' has a meteorological value. To expect its indications always to be true, is as unwarrantable as to expect a falling barometer always to mean rain, or a rising barometer always to mean fair—or what we fear to be even a more widely-spread popular error, a *high* barometer to mean 'set fair.' The true meteorological value of the spectroscope cannot be determined until many observations have been made; and the observer must supplement his observations by such considerations as the direction and strength of the wind, its tendency to change or otherwise, &c. There is thus a great deal of work to be done before the importance of the thing can be surely estimated; and those who have the opportunity will do well to help, while those who haven't must wait to learn the result.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLII.—'MISTER, THERE'S A SCORE OF LIVING SOULS ABOARD THAT CRAFT. LET GO THE WHEEL.'

MILLY found Gerard alone in the smoking-room. He was not smoking or reading, but simply standing with his hands in his coat-pockets, staring out of the window at the rain. At her entrance, he looked round, but turned back to the window without a word.

'Gerard,' she said tremulously, 'are you quite resolved on leaving us? Can you not be prevailed upon to stay?'

'Why should I stay?' he asked in answer.

She took sudden courage, and advancing, laid her hands upon his arm. '*Vengeance is mine*,'

she said; '*I will repay.*'—He looked swiftly down upon her, and away again.—'Gerard, dear Gerard, they are unhappy already. They have parted. Their own consciences were against them. You have suffered enough, but you have nothing to repent.'

'Good-bye, Milly,' he answered very gently. 'My train starts in an hour. I shan't see you again, most likely.' His manner was so quiet, that he might not have heard her words. But the imminence of the danger which she saw so clearly braced her for a moment.

'Gerard,' she urged him, 'do not go upon this journey. Think of your father, and his sorrows. Think of your mother. Or if you will go, promise me that you will not follow—him.'

A curious look crossed his face. 'Did you care for Val Strange?' he asked. 'You weren't in love with him, were you?'

'No, no!' she cried. At another time, such a question concerning any man would have called a blush to her face, but now she scarcely noticed it. 'Promise me! you will not follow him.'

'Good-bye, Milly,' he said again, as gently as before. But she clung to him with tears, and would not let him go.

'Stay!' she pleaded passionately.—'stay! For the sake of all who love you, stay!'

'Nothing of this,' he said, with an approach to sternness in his tones, 'to any one but me. Remember that. Good-bye, again.' He had always seen her so timid and so yielding until now, that her persistence amazed him. She clung to him with both hands; and without violence, which was impossible, he could not escape her. Seeing this, he stood with passionless sullen patience, and she wasted entreaty on a human rock. In the intensity of her eagerness, she tried to move him by force from where he stood; but she was so feeble and small, and he so great and strong, that with all her vehemence she could not sway him by a hair's-breadth. It was all so fearfully plain to her now, so certain that he meant the worst! 'Stay!' she wept, dragging at him with all her feeble strength. He answered never a word. The terror mounted higher and higher in her heart, and she assailed him incoherently. He must not, must not go, to break all their hearts.

'Hearts are not so easily broken,' he answered at last. It was like a statue speaking.

'You will break mine!' she cried.

'Poor Milly,' he answered gently.—'poor Milly!'—Suddenly she crimsoned, on brow and cheek and throat, and her hands dropped from him.—He kissed her on the forehead and passed from the room. The drooping, weeping figure, and the manner of his parting from it, crossed him many a time, later on, when his heart had softened and his longing for revenge was stilled.

He said the rest of his few farewells, and went up to London with Hiram. They drove straight to the river-side, and found the yacht almost in readiness to weigh anchor. It was significant to Hiram of the eagerness which lay beneath his master's stony exterior that he slept on board. Next morning came the sailing-master, a cheery-looking old man, with a face the colour of a brick wall, and silver hair and whiskers. He told Gerard that he had sailed the yacht for its last owner, and was full of her praises. In the after-

noon they started, in a heavy snow-storm; but before they reached Greenwich a small mutiny came about. One of the crew, who had been drinking too freely with his friends ashore, approached the captain.

'Beggin' pardon for bein' so bold, cap'n,' he said. 'I ain't a-going to sail in this yere craft.'

'Oh,' said the captain, good-humouredly enough, 'I think you are.'

'No; I ain't,' returned the seaman hoarsely.

'Not if I swims for it.'

'What's the matter?' asked Gerard, who was standing near.

'This craft's unlucky, *she is*,' the man responded; 'and no good 'll come of her.'

'What's the matter with her?' asked Gerard. A little chill came over him.

'Why, it's a Friday, to begin with,' said the man; 'and as if that worn't sufficient, we're thirteen aboard. Theer's you, cap'n, and the mate, and four of us, and that's six; and theer's a galley-cook and a cabin-cook, and that's eight; and theer's the engineer and a brace o' stokers, and that's eleven; and the gentleman here, and the Yankee cove, and that's thirteen; and I ain't a-goin' to sail in this yere craft.'

'Go to your duty,' said the captain, with a laugh. 'We shall have three more aboard at Greenwich,' he added; 'and I never heard, sir, tuning to Gerard, 'that sixteen was an unlucky number.'

'We starts with thirteen,' said the man, with drunken doggedness, 'and I don't sail aboard of this yere craft.'

'Better set him ashore,' said Gerard. 'I'm not an idler, and my man is an old salt. We shall not be short-handed.'

'Very well, sir,' returned the captain. 'But I wouldn't listen to a fool like that, sir. He'll be all right in the morning, when he's sober.'

'I won't sail in this yere craft,' the man repeated.

'Well, I don't want any Jonahs aboard me,' returned the captain, who may have had his qualms about unlucky numbers too. And so, when the boat which carried the remainder of the crew came alongside, the objector with his belongings was put into it, and dismissed with derisive hoots and groans by his comrades of an hour. 'Yah! Jonah!' The self-discharged stood up in the stern. 'You'll come to no good,' he roared; 'I tell you so; you'll come to no good.' And in the vehemence of his repudiation of them, he fell over sideways and dived headlong into Thames. The two boatmen hauled him out, and the men aboard the yacht were in fits of laughter. But there was one saturnine face among them. It was of course more than sufficiently absurd that a man of culture should be affected by the vaticinations of a drunken sailor; but the superstitions inherent in the heart live on in defiance of cultivation. Gerard, now that he came to think of it, would rather have sailed on any day in the seven than Friday, and would rather have carried any number at starting than thirteen. He sneered down these ridiculous fears, but they lived again in spite of him.

It was rough in the Channel, whose waters rather lorded it over their *Queen*, and it was rougher in the Bay of Biscay. But being once past Gibraltar, they found peace in the waters

of the Mediterranean until they came south of the Adriatic, where a fierce wind roared down from the Austrian Alps, and got to cross-purposes with a wicked gale which swept westward from the gates of the Black Sea, and made wild work for a time. The *Channel Queen* touched here and there, and Gerard went ashore and came aboard again. To Trieste. Across to Venice. Southward again to Brindisi. Then to Larnaca, a long stretch; and at Larnaca, he got the wished-for news. The yacht *Mew's-wing* sailed yesterday, bound for Alexandria. It was at the end of the second week in March, and in that happy region the sun was already warm and the air balmy. As the yacht left Larnaca behind, Gerard stood on deck looking straight beyond the prow, beating with one foot on the plank beneath him; and on his face there was a look of steadfast waiting, with now and then the merest transient flash of exultation. Hiram marked the new elasticity of his walk, and caught once or twice the gleam in his eyes. Not another soul aboard guessed the purpose of the cruise.

Master and servant were alike popular on board the little vessel, and each took his duty manfully. A day out from Cyprus shores, a heavy squall came on, and Gerard and Hiram did rather more than their fair share in it. The storm lasted ten hours, and when it had blown itself out, they went below, and slept. Eight hours later, Gerard came on deck.

'Seen anything?' he asked briefly.

'Sail on the weather-bow, sir,' said the mate, offering his glass.

Gerard took it, and looked long. 'What are we making?' he asked at last.

'About twelve, sir,' said the mate.

'There's no hurry,' said Gerard. 'It's a lovely morning. Slacken down a bit.'

'You'll find it a little heavy, sir, if you slacken speed. She rolls a good deal already.'

'Never mind,' he answered; 'we are in no hurry now.' The mate transmitted the master's orders, and the throb of the engines came slower on the ear. The change brought up Hiram Search, and he, setting his legs apart, scanned sea and sky. After a momentary observation, he gave a sudden start, and diving below, returned with marine glasses, and fixed the craft ahead.

'Hiram,' he said under his breath, 'you'll be wanted by-and-by, or I'm mistaken.'

'What is that craft doing, do you think?' asked Gerard, addressing the mate.

'She's making about our speed, sir,' the mate answered.

Gerard went below, and spent the day in his own cabin. Hiram hung uneasily about the vessel; now here, now there, and passed whole hours in watching the *Mew's-wing* as she courted, with half her white canvas set, to wind and sea. He knew every line of her long ago, and had recognised her at first sight. Towards nightfall, the wind failed, and having less way on her, she courted more and more. A wonderful moon arose, and the whole sea and sky lay bathed in her light.

'Hard times lately, sir,' said the captain cheerily, when Gerard came on deck.

'Never mind,' said Gerard quietly. 'Take another spell below. I'll sail her to-night. I feel wakeful.'

The captain protested, but Gerard insisted; and having made what he thought a decent resistance, the old man went down. He knew the master of the *Channel Queen* for a thorough sailor by this time, and was willing enough to get an extra snooze. 'You may tell the engineer to get a little extra way on,' said Gerard. 'Let us see what she can do. You can sleep without rocking.'

The captain laughed a cheery 'Good-night, sir,' as he went down.

The measured jar of the propeller grew swifter, and the speed of the craft greater. An hour later, Gerard went below for a minute, and returned with a bottle of rum beneath his pilot-coat. There were two seamen on deck, one at the wheel, and one at the bows. The sea gleamed wide beneath the moonlight, and slowly sank to peace after the squall, now at rest for sixteen hours. 'I'll take the wheel,' said Gerard, quietly handing the bottle to the man. 'You and your chum there can drink my health, if you like. You may both go down for an hour or two. I'll call you when I'm tired.' And now the deck was clear, and Gerard held the wheel.

'Great heavens!' murmured the wretched faithful Hiram, watchful of all, though unobserved. 'Is it goin' to be as bad and base as this?'

The moonbeams fell wide and soft upon the rolling sea, and the rolling sail of the *Mew's-wing* shot now and again in a silver gleam across the black edge of the liquid disk. The silver gleam rose higher, creeping up and up into the sky, and growing broader as it climbed. The helmsman steered, and the sole eyes under heaven that saw his purpose, watched. Stiff and chilled to the bone, Hiram crawled on deck and looked ahead.

'Who's there?' said Gerard.

'You mustn't do this, mister,' said Hiram, advancing and laying a hand upon one of the spokes of the wheel. The *Mew's-wing* was scarce a quarter of a mile ahead, and the steam yacht was in a line for her, going at full speed.—Gerard looked at him without a word.—'I could call the crew and stop it in a minute, mister,' said Hiram hoarsely; 'but I don't want to let it out that Gerard Lumby ever meant wholesale murder. Stand aside!—You won't, you madman? You shall!' He set his hands to the wheel; but he might as well have tried to lift the boat as to turn back the grip that guided her. 'Mister, there's a score of living souls aboard that craft. Let go the wheel.'

Gerard looked straight on with a face as rigid as stone.

'Hollo, there!' yelled a voice. 'Ahoy! ahoy! Where are you coming to? Port! port!'

The *Channel Queen* bore down. Hiram took his master by the waist and tore at him like a madman. The vessels were very near each other now.

'You'll forgive me some day,' said Hiram, and releasing Gerard, he retired a little, and then sprang forward like a flash and felled him with one blow to the deck. Then he seized the wheel and tore it round, jammed it hard down and closed his eyes. Confused wild cries were in his ears, and he looked out again. The yacht was within twenty yards of them, but safe.

There was a figure that he knew leaning forward from the shrouds, and Gerard was on his feet again, shaking a clenched hand at it. The clenched hand opened a denouncing forefinger, and a voice rang out: 'I shall have you yet, Val Strange!'

And the *Channel Queen* swept on, and left the *Mew's-wing* far behind.

(To be continued.)

CARD STORIES.

ON one occasion when Washington Irving, Bancroft, and Everett were chatting over diplomatic reminiscences, the last named told how after he and the Neapolitan ambassador had been presented to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Lord Melbourne intimated that they would be expected to join in a game at whist with the Duchess of Kent. 'I play but a very poor game myself,' said Melbourne; 'in fact, I scarcely understand it; but the Duchess is very fond of it.'—'And I,' said the Neapolitan to Everett, 'am a very bad player; and should I chance to be your Excellency's partner, I invoke your forbearance in advance;' to which the American envoy replied that he knew very little of the game himself. As he put it, three dignified personages, clad in gorgeous attire, were solemnly going to play a game they imperfectly understood, and for which none of them cared in the least. Upon reaching the Duchess's apartments the ambassadors were formally presented, and then, at her invitation, sat down to play. As soon as the cards were dealt, a lady-in-waiting placed herself at the back of the Duchess, and the latter said: 'Your Excellencies will excuse me if I rely upon the advice of my friend here, for I must confess that I am really a very poor player.' This was almost too much for Everett's gravity; a gravity undisturbed for the rest of the evening, since he found playing whist under such conditions inexpressibly dull work.

Cavour did not find playing an unfamiliar game dull work when he lost a large sum at double dummy whist to a member of a Paris Club. He paid the money with the best grace imaginable, merely remarking that he thought he saw the game, and it might not be such a bad investment after all. The next night he met the same antagonist, played high, played steadily, played long, and rose from the table a richer man by thirty thousand pounds.

Bold as he could be when the game was worth the candle, Lord Beaconsfield would never have been tempted to risk so much on the cards; for knowing the weakness of his play, he carefully eschewed anything like high stakes. One evening, at the time when parliament was agitating itself about the *Empress-ships of India*, Lord Beaconsfield sat down to whist with the Prince of Wales, and asked the latter: 'What points, sir?'—'Oh, sovereign, if you please,' was the answer.—Seeing the Premier's look of annoyance, Mr Bernal Osborne observed: 'I think, sir, the Premier would rather have *crown* points!' The Prince, taking the joke and the hint, altered the stakes accordingly.

Marlborough was not above playing for smaller stakes, though perhaps the Great Captain did not play high out of fear of his loving Sarah,

who had a tongue, and knew how to use it; like the lady whose liege lord contrived that she should not more than suspect the secret of his bad hours; until, coming home at six in the morning tired out with 'attending on a sick friend,' he dozed at the breakfast table, and solemnly passing the bread, said: 'Cut!—That's your sick friend, is it?' exclaimed the wife; and what followed may be imagined.

A card-hating wife can upon occasion set her scruples aside. Soon after the close of the Secession War, General Forrest and his wife stopped at an hotel in Memphis, and upon examining their purses, found the sum-total of their wealth amounted to seven dollars and thirty cents. The General being due that evening at a house where poker was sure to be played, proposed that he should tempt fortune to the full extent of his means, and asked his wife to pray for his success. She would not promise; but he felt she was for him, and knew how it would be. Let him tell the rest himself.

'They had tables—one was a quarter-dollar table, one a half, and one a dollar and a half. I wanted to make my seven dollars last as long as I could make it, so I sat down to the quarter table. By dinner-time I had won enough to do better; and after we had eaten, sat down to the dollar-and-a-half table. Sometimes I won, and then again I'd lose, until nigh upon midnight, when I had better luck. I knew Mary was sitting up anxious, and it made me cool. I set my hat on the floor, and every time I'd won I'd drop the money in the hat. I sat there until day broke, and then I took my hat up in both hands, smashed it on my head, and went home. When I got to my room, there sat Mary in her gown. She seemed tired and anxious, and though she looked mighty hard at me, she didn't say a word. I walked right up to her, and emptied my hat right into the lap of her gown, and then we sat down and counted it. Just fifteen hundred dollars even, and that gave me a start.'

Mr Clay's devotion to cards did not disturb his wife's equanimity in the least. Asked by a Northern belle if it did not distress her that her husband should gamble, the candid old lady replied: 'Not at all, my dear; he most always wins.'

The wife of Bishop Beadon loved whist so well, that when the prelate told one of his clergy if he was able to sit up half the night playing whist at the Bath Rooms, he must be well enough to do duty at home, the invalided one silenced him with: 'My lord, Mrs Beadon would tell you that late whist acts as a tonic or restorative to dyspeptic people with weak nerves.' The bishop's better-half would have sympathised with Goldsmith's old lady, who, lying sick unto death, played cards with the curate to pass the time away, and after winning all his money, had just proposed to play for her funeral charges, when she expired.

There have been stranger stakes still. In 1735, when Henry and James Trotter sat down at the *Salmon Inn*, Chester-le-Street, to play a game of cards against Robert Thoms and Thomas Ellison, the latter pair staking five shillings, and the former a child, the son of a Mr and Mrs Leesh, who gave up their boy to the winners.—A traveller in New Zealand, spending a night in a squatter's hut,

was invited to cut in for a rubber of whist. As he took his seat, he inquired: 'What points?' His partner responded in a tone significant of surprise at such a question: 'Why, the usual game, of course—sheep points, and a bullock on the rubber.'

Unless Espartero and his foe Marota are much belied, more momentous issues were decided by the cards in a lone farmhouse at Bergara, where they privately met to arrange a truce between their respective forces. No sooner did Espartero enter the room, than the Carlist chief challenged him to a game at tressilio, a challenge the Christino commander accepted with alacrity. Espartero first won all Marota's money, then his own conditions for the truce, article by article, and finally the entire submission of the Carlist army. Within twenty-four hours, Marota had paid his debt, and the first Carlist war was at an end.

A Mr Purdy, as the end of his bachelorhood drew nigh, let his old cronies know it was his intention to forswear card-playing after perpetrating matrimony. They thereupon put their heads together, and a day or two after the wedding, invited him to a little dinner at Delmonico's, at which he was to receive a three hundred dollar silver service. Dinner done, and the presentation made, the party made themselves and their guest merry over some excellent wine, and when they thought the time had come, proposed a game of poker; and after a little hesitation, Purdy gave in 'just for this once.' His hosts had fixed things nicely, and calculated upon winning the price of their wedding gift, the dinner, and the wine. The game went on till long after daylight appeared, but by that time the intended victim had cleaned every one of them out, besides retaining lawful possession of the silver service.

Even the sharpest of sharpers may meet more than his match. Robert Houdin happening to saunter into a continental casino where a Greek was reaping a rare harvest at écarté, looked on quietly until a seat became vacant, and then dropped into it. The Greek, dealing dexterously, turned a king from the bottom of the pack. When the deal came to Houdin, he observed: 'When I turn kings from the bottom of the pack, I always do it with one hand instead of two; it is quite as easy, and much more elegant. See! here comes his majesty of diamonds;' and up came the card. The cheat stared at the conjurer for a moment, and then rushed from the place, without waiting to possess himself of his hat, coat, or stakes.

Another of the fraternity, after winning ten games at écarté in succession, tried his fortune against a new opponent; and still his luck held. He had made four points, and dealing, turned up a king and won. 'My luck is wonderful,' said he. 'Yes,' said his adversary; 'and all the more wonderful since I have the four kings of the pack in my pocket!' and the professor of legerdemain laid them on the table.

'I remember,' said a gentleman who had travelled in Russia, 'being at a ball given by the Empress to the late Emperor, on his birthday. I was playing at écarté, when the Emperor, who was wandering about, came behind me to watch the game. My adversary and I were both at four,

and it was my deal. "Now," said the Emperor, "let us see whether you can turn up the king?"—I dealt, and then held up the turn-up card, observing: "Your orders, sir, have been obeyed."—A dozen times afterwards, the Emperor asked me how I managed it; and he never would believe that it was a mere hazard, and that I had taken the chance of the card being a king.'

The Czar was as much astonished at the result of his remark as the young gentleman who, looking over a pretty girl's shoulder while she was playing cards, observed: 'What a lovely hand!'—'You may have it, if you want it,' murmured she; and all the rest of the evening he was wondering what her intentions were.

MY NEW FRIEND.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

THE day appointed for the meeting, as detailed in the last chapter, was evidently to be an important one in my little history; for I was at length to see one of my employers, and I hoped that he would be favourably impressed with me. Perhaps I felt quite as much anxiety about my being favourably impressed with him. With his coming, too, my first recognised transaction in the service would be completed; for the representative of the Belgian firm would appear also, and hand me the delivery-orders for these goods, in return for cash. It was essential, as Scate had pointed out to me, that I should manage all this, as my agency would be largely concerned in the Belgian trade, and it was well that these people should see at the outset that I was intrusted with the conduct of a big affair. I was pleased at this, of course, and Mr Chelps was no less delighted than myself.

When the morning arrived, Mr Chelps was in unusual spirits, hopping about with a briskness quite remarkable for him, and quite remarkable, too, in an elderly invalid. He had already told me that he had succeeded in obtaining the money; he had received this on the previous afternoon, but it was in the form of a cheque; and he foresaw some difficulty in its acceptance by the Belgians, who would naturally regard a cheque offered by him with very different eyes from what they would regard one from such a firm as Bunner, Wreggs, and Carrowble. He had told Scate that this would probably be the case; and the latter, with his usual readiness, had promised that he would arrange so as to prevent any obstacle or inconvenience.

So remarkably brisk was Mr Chelps, that, having obtained permission for our servant Lizzie to go on a rather long errand for him, he insisted upon opening the street door to all callers himself, to save Mrs Matley and myself the trouble. Not only did his buoyant spirits prompt him to do this, and to sit all the morning, or nearly so, in the office, to be in readiness, but he avowed his intention of buying 'quite a lot of flowers,' as

he said; and so opened our front door at least half-a-dozen times to hail the passing vendors of roots, blossoms, or bulbs. Once or twice, I came up into the hall while he was haggling with these men; but each time he playfully insisted upon my going back, as he did not intend Mrs Matley to have the slightest idea of what he was going to buy. It was to be a surprise for her, he said.

So the morning wore on until, punctual to his appointed time, Mr Scate appeared; and almost directly after him, the Belgian representative. This latter was a portly, respectable-looking gentleman, who seemed father surprised at the aspect of the house to which he had been summoned to transact such important business. Scate evidently caught the glance, and, ready as usual, said: 'All very new here, sir—we shall have it altered in a few days. It was a long way to fetch you from the City; but Mr Matley—this is Mr Matley—we bowed to each other—will have a great part of our Belgian and French connection business, and so we wish him and his branch-house to be individually known to our continental friends. However, I'm sure you'll not mind, so long as the cash is here; and here it is.'

'No, sir,' returned the gentleman, who did not seem very much impressed by the rather ready jocularity in which Mr Scate so much excelled. 'As you say, it is no business of mine.'

'You have the delivery-notes, or warrants, of course?' said Scate, becoming terse in his turn.

'I have; here they are,' returned the stranger; 'and here is a receipt for sixteen hundred pounds cash.'

'Quite right,' said Scate.—'Now, Mr Chelms, your cheque.—And here in good time is Mr Wreggs; so you will have the security and see the principal at once, as I promised.' As he spoke, he ran and opened the door, at which a loud knock had just been given, and ushered in a dark, keen-looking man, who struck me as being one of the most sinister-looking individuals I had ever beheld; an idea not weakened by his being loaded with much ponderous jewellery.

'This is Mr Herdley, who represents Delvoi & Co., sir.—And this is Mr Matley, our new agent, sir, of whom I spoke to you.—And this is Mr Chelms, a personal friend, who wishes, as I have told you, sir, to be allowed to join in your speculations.'

Mr Wreggs acknowledged each introduction with a short bow, accompanied in each case by a furtive glance, which in a measure reminded me of my customer Mr Jerry Wilkins.

'Will you see if those are right, sir?' said Scate to the new arrival, handing him the papers from Mr Herdley, as it seemed the Belgian agent was called.

'Yes; they will do,' said Wreggs; and after a little bustle in getting out his pocket-book,

Scate gathered up the papers again and laid them on the desk.

'Now, Mr Chelms,' he continued, 'Mr Wreggs has kindly promised to bring some more notes, as I know foreign houses are sometimes very reluctant to take the cheques of strangers.—Have you brought them, sir?'

'Yes,' said Wreggs briefly, drawing out in his turn a bulky pocket-book and handing therefrom a packet to Scate.

'Thank you, sir.—Then, if you will give me your cheque, Mr Chelms,' continued the latter, 'I will hand over notes of equal value, and give you the warrants besides.'

Mr Chelms, who had been gazing, as it seemed to me, in a kind of rapt admiration from Mr Wreggs to the Belgian agent, and back from the Belgian agent to Mr Wreggs, at this appeal produced a carefully folded paper from his pocket, and took thence a familiar-looking slip—the cheque. 'It's on the Bank of England, you see,' he said, as he handed it to Scate. 'Your friend Mr Wreggs knows all about that establishment.' He laughed as he said this; and the laugh was repeated by Scate and Wreggs, but in very different tones.

The former took the cheque, and thrust the heap of notes, increased by some from his own pocket, to Mr Herdley, saying: 'You will find those right, I have no doubt, sir;' then pushed the papers, or warrants, to Mr Chelms, adding: 'And there is your security, sir.'

Mr Chelms clutched them eagerly, crammed them into his pocket, and then, to my surprise, thrust two of his fingers into his mouth, and whistled loudly. We all started in amazement, and looked at him; but before a single word could be spoken, the door of the room was thrown violently open, and then, to my greater amazement, four men rushed in. In the momentary glance I caught of them as they entered, I saw that two of them were certainly fellows of whom I had seen Chelms buying flowers an hour before, while another was as certainly the stranger to whom I had spoken at the bar of the *Three Bells*.

'What the'—began Scate, turning fiercely upon Chelms; but ere he could complete his sentence, the old man had sprung from his chair full upon him, and had thrown his arms around him, two of the strangers seizing Mr Wreggs at the same instant.

'Get off, you old fool!' shouted Scate, with a savage oath; 'leave go, or it'll be the worse for you.'

'On with the bracelets, Bill!' cried Chelms, in a tone utterly different from his usual voice, and maintaining his grip with overpowering force, despite of the tremendous struggles of Scate. The latter plunged and kicked desperately; but the stranger of the *Three Bells* assisted Mr Chelms in holding his man, while one of the costermongers—actually one of the flower-men—pulled out a pair of handcuffs; and in thirty seconds from the time the door was opened, Scate and Mr Wreggs were each handcuffed and each held in the grip of two men; while Mr Herdley and myself looked on in helpless surprise and, in my case at anyrate, some little dread.

When he released his hold of Scate, Chelms turned to me with a smile—a smile slight and

quiet in itself, but which yet seemed to change him altogether, so that I should hardly have known the man. 'You will apologise to Mrs Matley, if you please, for our causing so much unpleasantness in her house,' he said; 'but it was unavoidable. We shall not require your assistance at present; and I wish you particularly to assure your kind little wife that this will do you no harm—rather the other way. I shall call again this evening, after attending the court with our friends.'

Then turning to Mr Herdley, he continued: 'We shall want you with us, sir.—Now, Bill'—to one of the costermonger-like men, as I had once thought them, but whom I now began to see were something different—'call a couple of cabs, and let us be off.'

'But who—who and what are you?' I said, although I felt that I could have answered the question myself; 'and what have these men been doing?'

'I am Sergeant Moley from Scotland Yard,' replied my lodger. 'My name may be known to you. I will tell you all about these gentlemen when I call round this evening.'

His name known to me! I should think it was indeed, as that of the most dreaded and successful detective officer of the day.

'Oh, it's you, is it?' hissed Scate. 'If ever I get clear again, I'll put a bullet into you, if you are above ground.'

'Ah!' said Chelms—or Moley—coolly, 'that's what you are going to do when you are free. You are not free now, and my advice to you is to wait until you are, before you talk of your plans.'

In another minute the cabs arrived, and the whole of the strange party took their departure; Moley again leaving an assuring message for my wife, while the stranger of the *Three Bells* paused in the doorway to give me a most expressive wink.

I need not say how startled Susan was by my account of the long expected interview; indeed, but for the message left by Mr Chelms, in whom she still had great confidence, although he turned out to be a disguised detective—but for this, I am sure she would have utterly broken down. It was a great change, to be sure. All my bright visions, all my hope of returning prosperity, gone at a blow! and we were now as badly off, or even worse than when the hateful bills announcing the sale of my furniture were affixed to the house.

The day wore slowly and miserably away, until we had almost given up the hope of seeing our late lodger, when a knock was heard, and Lizzie after answering it, came to the breakfast-room door, and with her eyes opened to their utmost power of staring, and a face expressive of the most intense astonishment, said: 'Mr Chelms, ma'am, has called, and wants to see you.'

'Ask Mr Chelms down,' said my wife; and the next instant there was heard a quick firm step on the stairs, and then a dark, close-cropped, clean-shaved man, with keen small eyes, of square and powerful build, presented himself. He held out his hand, exclaiming: 'What! don't you know your old lodger?'

We asked him to sit down, which he did; and after a few apologetic remarks to my wife, he said, in answer to our inquiries, that he would

make a clean breast of it, and tell us all about the mystery. 'And, as you know I am fond of a pipe,' he continued, 'I will take the liberty, ma'am, of having a whiff during my story. I always think a man gets on better if he smokes.'

We of course made no objection; and Mr Chelms—to give him once more his old familiar name—after a moment's delay in preparation, lighted his pipe, took two or three kindling 'whiffs' at it, and then proceeded with his narration, thus:

'You know already that I am in the police, Mr Matley—and you, ma'am—so I need not stay to explain anything about that. Well, in the course of business, during the last year or two, we have been put on the track of a very dangerous and artful gang of swindlers, who were up to all sorts of dodges. Sometimes they would buy goods, and pay for them with bills that were never met. Sometimes they paid for them in forged notes, which then got into general circulation. Sometimes they bought stolen goods and goods from fraudulent debtors; in fact there's no telling all the games they were up to; and yet we could never quite get hold of them. More than once we have caught the men who actually appeared in the work; but they were at the best subordinates; more often, indeed, they were dupes themselves. At last it was pretty clear that one Edward Phillips, *alias* Scate, *alias* Nottingham Ned—by which last name he was generally known in flash circles—was deep in the business; and we were ordered to keep him in view.'

'We got some information soon after this which proved of use. We were told that his firm—as you know he calls it—were about to try their games on with some Belgian people, and that he was going to open a new receiving-house by the aid of a man who knew nothing of the firm or its plans. This man was you, Mr Matley; but as we did not wish to be always catching the dupe, who was as innocent as the persons who had been cheated themselves, I hit upon a plan by which I hoped to penetrate a little farther into the mystery. I made inquiries about you, sir; and found what difficulties you were in, and what a good character you bore, so I could pretty nearly tell what line Scate would take with you, and when he would begin.'

'I hit it, you must own, fairly well. I came to ask about your lodgings; and, to my delight, when I was asked into this very room, there sat the man I was most interested in. He did not want you to leave this house for a bit, so he eagerly advised you to take such an easy-going, purblind, thick-headed old fellow as me for a lodger. Of course I had expected to take furnished apartments; but when I found how things were, I said I would prefer bringing my own.'

'And so you did Mr—Ch—Moley!' exclaimed my wife; 'beautiful new furniture, which your married daughter, who had gone to Australia, had recently bought for you.'

'Ah! yes, to be sure, my married daughter! her furniture!' returned our friend, with a broad grin. 'Why, bless your heart, ma'am, I went straight from here that night and hired

it. I haven't got any married daughters! I haven't got any daughters at all. I'm an old bachelor.

'Good gracious!' exclaimed my wife again; 'but you were quite overcome when you spoke of the loss of Mrs Chelms. Do you mean to say'—

'I do indeed, ma'am,' interrupted Mr Moley. 'We are obliged to do those things in the detective work. I could see you did not really like Scate; nor did Mr Matley.'

'I did not,' I said; 'I took a dislike to him from the first.'

'But to go on with my story. Once in the house and seeing him, and hearing what he had told you, my work began to be as plain as ABC. It was quite clear he meant you to run your head into the trap, and buy the stolen goods; be the responsible agent; give the forged bills; get rid of the flash notes, and so on. But the thing wanted was to get him to play all his cards at once, so as to smash the whole concern; because you see, ma'am, I wasn't quite satisfied even with the chance of getting him, while there were others behind. So I talked about my ready-money which I wished to have employed; and he jumped at the bait more readily than I expected.

'His plans were soon altered. Instead of going on gradually with you, he meant to have a big haul over this Belgian affair, and then sheer off. He meant, it was very clear, to sell the goods directly he got hold of them. He, or his precious partner Wreggs, had already sounded some people about buying them, and found they could get very nearly full value on the dock warrants. Then there was my money—eleven hundred pounds, you know—the two things together making such a pull as he did not often get.

'The first transaction you had was with Mr Jerry Wilkins. His name is no more Wilkins than mine is; but that don't matter. Well, what you bought was plate, sir, the proceeds of some burglaries at the West End.—Don't be alarmed, ma'am; nothing can touch your husband, who had no knowledge of what he was doing. Well, I wanted to be sure of this; so I took care to listen, and to loiter in the front garden so that I could see Mr Jerry when he called'—

'Then I suppose,' said I, interrupting him, 'that I really did see you looking over the banisters, and hiding at the back of the hall on both nights?'

'You did so, sir,' replied Mr Moley; 'and on the evening he came I planted one of our people at the *Three Bells*, who sent a boy to your place with a message, and so got you out of the way, while I examined the parcel you had bought. But when you said you had had a "turn" through not being able to find the package, which was on a different chair from where you thought you had laid it, you gave me a "turn" too; for while you spoke, I remembered that I had left it on the wrong chair. However, it came all right; and Scate no doubt thought it was all right, as he had succeeded in making you buy stolen goods. Yet, if this Belgian affair could be brought off, he would not want you at all; that was plain enough.

'Well, sir, to cut this short, as you know most of it. I was aware that these men were desperate

ruffians of the worst class. You would hardly think it, ma'am, but I am morally sure, though I can't bring it home to him, that this Scate has been in some of the cruellest things ever committed. So I got some of our men to call this morning, some dressed up as costermongers, one to ask a question, and so on, and I slipped them in without any one seeing them, and stowed them away in my room. When I whistled, they were to rush down at once.

'All went beautifully. The partner Mr Wreggs—a worse scoundrel, if possible, than the other—turned up just as I wished; while Mr Scate having got hold of my cheque, paid the Belgian party in bank-notes, every one of which was forged. He had given me the chance to examine them beforehand. He was a little too clever. He had prepared false dock-notes too; and when he was pretending to let his partner examine the originals and so forth, he changed the sets, so that he held the true ones, while he gave me the forgeries. When this was all done, I thought he had gone far enough, so I just gave my whistle, and— Well, you saw the rest.

'I did see the rest!' I ejaculated; 'and thoroughly astonished I was to see it. But the strange gentleman—the Belgian agent—was he also of the gang?'

'O no!' exclaimed Moley; 'he certainly was not; and there come's in, ma'am, the best part of my story.' (He always addressed my wife, when he had anything specially interesting to say.) 'If I hadn't got such a finish to tell, I don't think I should have troubled you by coming round to-night. Mr Herdley was aware there was something suspicious in the business, although he did not know exactly what it was; and at first he thought, naturally enough, it was you, Mr Matley, who was at the bottom of it all. But I took care to put all that right; and shall always be glad I hit upon the idea of coming here to lodge, if only for being able, through doing so, to clear away any suspicion of that kind. Well, Mr Herdley and Mr Crobson, the head of your late firm, having married two sisters, are of course very friendly; and owing to what Mr Herdley has been able to say about you this day, your late firm have taken a great interest in you; so much so, ma'am, that old Mr Richards, the head-clerk, having resigned, they will write to-morrow, offering your husband the post.'

Susan and myself each uttered a cry of surprise here.

'It's quite, right, ma'am, you may rely,' continued Mr Moley, evidently delighted at the impression he had made; 'you will have the letter to-morrow for certain. And who so fit as you, Mr Matley, a man who knows the business, and who has always done his duty by the firm.'

I cannot stay to repeat all we said, or how we thanked the kindly detective, or how he pretended to ridicule my wife for crying at what ought to make her smile, while I could actually see a sympathetic glistening in his own eyes. He stayed with us long enough to smoke several pipes.

When he rose to leave, he said: 'Now, joking apart, ma'am, just the sober truth, you know—don't you think I was pretty well got up as an old man?—pretty well, for an amateur, you know?'

'It was wonderful,' said my wife. 'I never was more deceived in my life. I never saw anything on the stage to compare with it.'

Mr Moley quite giggled with pleasure and pride on hearing this testimony to his skill, and went away on excellent terms with himself.

His prophecy was borne out to the letter. My old employers wrote to me the next day; and on the following Monday I took my seat as head of the counting-house in which I had worked so long as a clerk. Nor did Mr Moley himself fare badly. The arrest of Scate and Wreggs led to other captures, and finally to the breaking-up of the best organised and most dangerous gang of swindlers in London; a result which brought Mr Moley promotion, a handsome present from some merchants, and repeated eulogiums in the press; the latter testimonials giving him, perhaps, the greatest pleasure of the whole; for with all his shrewdness and determination, he was rather a vain man.

For many years, until, indeed, he retired to his native county on a pension, Moley came once in each half-year to dine with us; always on a Sunday, and always with presents for our children, who regarded him as a sort of extra uncle, and were always uproariously glad to see him.

CRICKET CHAT.

BY AN OLD HAND.

Now that the bats and pads and flannels have been stowed away in their winter homes, and one more cricket season has gone to be numbered with the past, it is a fitting opportunity for us lovers of the grand old game to indulge in a little cricket chat. In cricket, as in all other sports and pleasures, retrospect is almost as delightful as actual enjoyment; and the true devotee of the game recounts past exploits, and tells how fields were won or lost, with just the same gusto that the Nimrod relates famous races, the mountaineer dwells upon past conquests, and the explorer shudders again over past risks and perils. So you young cricketer of the present day, with the bronze of the past season's sun scarcely yet driven from your face, and I, cricketer of the old school, whose cricket bronze has long since faded, will draw our chairs together and talk.

Let us just begin with the game as it was played on the old Lansdown and Brighton grounds, and upon the ever-green Vine at Sevenoaks, by gentlemen in silk tights and buckled shoes, and at a later period by old fogies like myself. The main features of the glorious old game are of course the same—a fact well worthy of remembrance by those who are fond of decrying the present age as one of wholesale innovation and Vandalic reform. But could royal Frederick Prince of Wales—Fred who was killed at Epsom by a blow from a cricket-ball—and his grandson the 'First Gentleman,' rise from their graves, and be stationed, say, at Canterbury or at Lord's, as spectators of one of our great matches, we may imagine that their surprise would equal that of one of Boadicea's warriors, could he be resuscitated and shown over Woolwich Arsenal. Fred and George used

four stumps in their game, and the modern bails were represented by a piece of wood laid upon the tops of the stumps; moreover, the stumps were not more than one half the height of those now in vogue; so that, as we shall see when we come to describe the bats used, to bowl a wicket was by no means an easy task. This arrangement of the stumps may be seen by an inspection of the interesting old illustrated score-sheets which hang upon the walls of the pavilion at the Sevenoaks Vine. Whether the 'W. Gs' or the Murdochs of the present day could run up their colossal scores with the bats familiar to Fred and George, is an open question; but to us, accustomed to the sturdy yet beautifully made willow weapons of the present day, they seem very cumbrous and unwieldy affairs. In London, two of them might have been seen not very long since in the window of Mr Mortlock's shop at the Waterloo Railway approach; but they have disappeared; and for the benefit of those who have not seen them, they may be described as huge scimitar-shaped pieces of dark wood, made of one piece, and guiltless of splice or whipping or inserted whalebone, or of any of the little peculiarities of the modern 'stick,' and weighing considerably more than the double of the bat familiar to us. The ball, too, was a very ponderous concern, resembling more the *balista* of the ancient Romans than anything connected with modern games; and we can well understand that poor Fred did not survive the blow he received upon Epsom Downs.

It is quite an error to suppose that by the name given to the present era of cricket, the age of fast bowling, our ancestors' cricket was a tame and effeminate pursuit. Alfred Mynn, Squire Osbaldistone, and Lord Frederick Beaudekerk, could sling the balls in their under-hand style, at a pace which would make you, who may have seen Tarrant and Jackson, and who of course are familiar with 'Demon Spofforth' and Foord-Kelcey, stare as at the discovery of a new fact. And it should be remembered that the heroes first mentioned above no more thought of walking garished with pads and gloves to the wickets, than a sensible man would dream nowadays of going without them.

The introduction of the 'break-back' and 'twist' into the science of bowling—which is probably due to Fuller Pilch and old Lillywhite, although John Nyren, the earliest authority on cricket, mentions one man who was a master of these branches of cricket-cunning in his day—has of course rendered our modern bowling very far more efficacious than the old straight ahead honest system of 'trundling'; and it is to be doubted whether Alfred Mynn would be able to do much against A. G. Steel or Pate, although he might play Spofforth or Rotherham as well as any man can play such first-class fast bowling. I must say that I think it much to be regretted that there are so few fast under-hand bowlers at the present day, when there are such crowds of men and boys who waste time and energy in attempting to attain proficiency in the science of bowling round hand, notwithstanding all evidence that the gift is not in them. This opinion may be confirmed by watching the bowling at an ordinary match of the third or fourth class, and by noting

the very small proportion of straight balls delivered by men who professedly bowl for wickets and not for catches; and also by noting how frequently men who are, as a rule, 'very decent' bats, are completely nonplussed when confronted by village champions who are the last depositaries of the old fast under-hand style. If you doubt the efficacy of this style, make a point next season of going to Chislehurst, and observe the fatal effect of Crowhurst's bowling amongst good batsmen.

Paradoxical as it may appear, a cricketer of the old school is struck with the want of individual enthusiasm in modern cricket, notwithstanding the fact that the national enthusiasm in the game is growing year by year. To one match played fifty years ago, there are now probably played several hundred; yet I doubt if the combined enthusiasm of the hundreds of modern matches equals that which characterised the one match of the old days. The introduction of the colonial element into our great matches has brought out, naturally enough, the patriotic enthusiasm of English cricketers of all classes; but with this exception, there is none of the earnest, anxious, business-like interest taken in the game as of old. In the days, as the old cricketing song says,

When the great old Kent Eleven, full of pluck and hope, began
The great battle with All England, single-handed man to man,

a cricket-match between two clubs or villages aroused in the breasts of the spectators and of the players themselves, an intensity of excitement, an eagerness, an anxiety which only find modern parallels at a Tyneside boat-race or a stillly contested election. Men went to cricket-matches then, not so much to spend an agreeable day beneath the shade of tall trees, to make a sort of picnic of the affair, with the accompaniments of gaily dressed ladies, military bands, and extravagant refreshments, as to enter heart and soul into the contest; to keep their eyes fastened on the game; to see how 'our Bill' would come off; to cheer lustily at every good stroke; to criticise; to live, in fact, in no other world for the time being than that shut within the limit of the cricket-field proper.

But what do we see now in one of our great Metropolitan matches? Be the title of the match ever so attractive, the majority of the company outside the ropes have come to see each other and to be seen, and it is to be doubted, if an analysis were to be made of the conversation of the five or ten thousand people present, whether the topics discussed would very materially pertain to the game itself. As with the spectators, so with the players themselves. Kentish Smith meets Kentish Jones, who has been playing in a county match. In the old days, Smith's first question would have been: 'Well, old fellow, did we win?' To-day, it would be: 'Well, old man, how many did you make?' or, 'How many wickets did you take?' The county man of the present day who gets out first ball, does not hang his head and walk despondently back to the pavilion because he has failed to uphold the honour of his county, but because he has been individually unfortunate and has 'spoilt his average.' At schools, the old feelings are cer-

tainly kept up; but when the boys leave school and go into the great cricketing world as men, it is to be feared they too frequently adopt the world's way of thinking, and play the fine old game simply for self. The very universality of cricket is, of course, the reason for this. Kent beats Sussex on Monday, and on Saturday the feat is forgotten. But in the old days, the victory would have been a subject for congratulation and enthusiasm for weeks after. Exceptions to this general apathy have been seen in the matches played by the Australian team in England. I believe that every Englishman who has been a spectator of these contests has been animated by a genuine earnest wish to see the Old Country come off victorious; and few who were present can forget the scene at Kennington Oval in September 1880, or in August of the present year, when twenty-five thousand persons were assembled to see the match between England and Australia. That was a sight to make the coldest and most impassive of hearts burn with enthusiasm; for it was a genuine match of the old sort, played by the finest living exponents of the game, in the face of the most critical cricket audience ever assembled.

When our ancestors played a cricket-match, they made of it a good, thorough employment and amusement for a whole day. There was no wasting the cream of the morning hours, as is now invariably the rule; no dawdling about with cigarettes in mouth; no aimless hitting and bowling at improvised wickets until within an hour and a half of luncheon-time; no unpardonable delays over luncheon and during the innings. They pitched their wickets at half-past nine, and by ten o'clock were hard at work—work which they continued until one o'clock, when they adjourned for half an hour, at the expiration of which time they recommenced play, and continued until the hour fixed for the drawing of the stumps. Now, this particular evil of indefensible waste of time is growing every day. It is quite the exception for any so-called 'whole-day match' to commence before twelve o'clock; and all who are familiar with active life in any shape, are aware how invaluable both in execution of brain and limb are the two hours preceding mid-day. At two o'clock the luncheon-bell rings. Luncheon lasts during the best part of an hour, and modern notions enact that it should be followed by a pipe or cigar, which brings the hour of recommencement up to three or beyond it. In these days of rapid communication, distance is no excuse to be offered for such meaningless waste of time as the commencement of a match at mid-day; and that it cannot be considered for a moment as an excuse is evident from the fact that there are hundreds of men who accept invitations to play 'whole-day matches' on Saturdays, and who find time to run up to town and accomplish a certain amount of business before it is necessary to put in an appearance on the cricket-ground.

Another crying evil which calls for the attention of all true cricketers is, as we have already hinted, the unnecessary extravagance and long duration of the modern cricket-lunch. The old cricketers adjourned to cold beef, bread-and-cheese, and beer; and surely we are not a whit inferior to them in

physical stamina and capability. But what do we often see? The modern cricketer, it may be taken for granted, is a man in full health and strength, makes a hearty breakfast between eight and ten o'clock in the morning, and yet it is deemed absolutely necessary that at two o'clock he should sit down to pickled salmon, meat-pies, cold and often hot joints, puddings, jellies, and tarts, washed down by beer, wine, and spirits of all kinds. No wonder he lounges out into the field afterwards as if he were filing out of church, and reluctantly parts with the end of his cigar or the unconsumed remnant of his pipe. No wonder that the batsmen who have become 'well-set' before lunch, frequently retire at the first straight ball, that catches are missed, and that 'wides' swell the total of the 'extras.' All this tends to support the statement we have made above, that the game is now regarded too much in the light of a picnic, and that the luxury which from all time has been the invariable accompaniment of progressive civilisation and refinement, has at last invaded many of the fields wherein, as the Iron Duke said, England's victories have been won.

In justice, however, I must concede that these delinquencies and shortcomings in the modern game have not yet become universal. There are hundreds of matches played every Saturday in England in the good old way—without waste of time, extravagances, or eccentricities. And after all, as you say, cricket is a pastime, and if some of its modern gentlemen exponents choose to invest it with the character of a picnic, why, be it so; it is so much the worse for the game, and perhaps for themselves. There is another evil, too, which is a serious one, and which has crept in with all these innovations. I mean the expense. A cricketer of the present day—I do not mean a village-green cricketer, but a member of some recognised club, who is prepared to follow the fortunes of the club wherever within reasonable limits they may lead him—must be a man of some means. Travelling expenses of course form an unavoidable item; but costume is considerably more than an item; and luncheon-money runs up very soon to the dimensions of a goodly sum. Cricket paraphernalia, too, are expensive, for every man who plays cricket at all regularly must be possessed of at least two bats, a pair of pads, and gloves; and all these put on to the sum of the annual subscription, form an almost insurmountable obstacle to many men. Still, as you remark, the old game flourishes exceedingly, and right glad I am to see it.

English cricketers have learned a lesson this year from the visit of the Australian team generally, and from the result of the great match in August at the Oval in particular. Amongst ordinary cricketers—I speak not of such men as those who fought for the Old Country in the above-mentioned contest—individual average, that course of modern cricket, is the object of paramount importance to men from the very day they begin to fancy themselves becoming proficient.

To be a good cricketer nowadays seems to me to mean simply possessing the knack of knocking up runs. Let the doubter of this visit two or three of the great open spaces near London upon a Saturday afternoon. He will see that the applause which greets the success of a patient, painstaking bowler, or which follows a smart

piece of fielding, is nothing compared with that which is sure to reward a long innings or even a showy 'gallery' hit. Now, the Australians have shown us how utterly absurd this is. It may be said that they pursued their almost unbroken career of victory during their sojourn in England, simply by their magnificent all-round play. Every one of their men can be depended upon to do something out of the special department for which he is famed. Bonnor is a terrific hitter, but he is also a magnificent field; Bannerman, most patient of batsmen, fields and bowls equally well; Blackham, who vies with 'our Mr Lyttelton' for the honour of being the best wicket-keeper in the world, is a safe run-getter: in fact, without individualising the remainder of the men, we may say, that with perhaps the exception of Spofforth, who is good chiefly as a bowler, there is not such a thing in any department of the game as a 'tail' in the team. They are not a whit superior to us as batsmen. We could raise half a dozen such batting elevens, but I very much doubt if one of those elevens would, at such a critical period as during the last hour's play during the match at the Oval, show such wonderful nerve as did the Australians. They left us with the splendid record of having played thirty-eight matches, and of having been beaten but four times; whilst of the drawn matches, it was quite possible, when we remember their extraordinary faculty for 'pulling a game out of the fire,' that they might have won at least two. No county Eleven was victorious against them; whilst in some cases the utter discrepancy of power was so great, that the games were reduced to the level of farces—notably in the cases of Sussex, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Kent, and even Nottingham and Gloucestershire. In four instances have they beaten combination Elevens which might almost be considered representative; and, with the exception of the Cambridge University match, the defeats they have encountered have been inflicted by very strong, carefully chosen, and fully representative teams.

In the county matches, the causes of defeat have invariably been one of two—weak fielding, or unaccountable panic; and, as I have stated above, it has been to their excellent fielding and to their never-to-be shaken nerve that the Australians owe their success, far more than to their superiority as batsmen. However, the feeling of national humiliation seems to have taken such deep root amongst all classes of cricketers, that upon the next occasion of a visit from Australian cricketers, I sincerely hope the amount standing to the credit of Old England at the end of the season, may be of a very much more substantial nature than the balance of 1882.

What does an evening's practice at cricket mean, to the ordinary amateur of the present day? It means standing up with nets on each side and behind, to be bowled at for a quarter of an hour by a professional, afterwards to saunter away to smoke cigarettes or to play lawn-tennis. Who ever heard—I speak particularly of London clubs; I know not the custom in the country so well—of such a thing as fielding practice? Who ever saw an acknowledged bowler of merit, or rather of a man who might be a bowler of merit if he chose to take pains, bowling on the practice-

ground as he would bowl in a match? But every man bats his very best at practice. Does not this prove, my young friend, that your modern cricketers think everything of batting, and, to use an American expression, let everything else rip? Take down your nets; have double-wicket practice once a week; let every man try at least to be proficient in some one department of the game beyond batting, and when the Australian team next visits us, they will find county teams far harder nuts to crack than during the year 1882.

THE MONTH. SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MONSIEUR ESTIENNE, a well-known corn-merchant of Marseilles, annually compiles a most useful pamphlet giving information regarding the harvests of France and other countries in the northern hemisphere. This information he collects by means of inquiries addressed to leading men at home and abroad; and its authentic nature has long been recognised, for the little volume now holds its own in the corn-trade as a reliable guide. The issue for the present year is of a most satisfactory nature; for the reports are none of them of that gloomy character which familiar tales of agricultural failure would lead us to expect. The English crops generally are described as being the best for the past seven years. Scotland also sends satisfactory reports. In Ireland we learn that unfavourable weather has caused the wheat-crop to be under the average, but still the prospects were far from gloomy. Reports from Austria, Hungary, Russia, Germany, and other European states, all speak of plenty; while the wheat-harvest in the United States is described as the best ever gathered. Taking the information as a whole, we find that the world's harvest of 1882 is above the average, and is far better than has been experienced during the many years that these statistics have been collected.

We may reasonably hope that the attention now paid to agricultural chemistry, to improved machinery, and, more than all, the knowledge that has been acquired regarding insect pests, will gradually bring round British farming to its former prosperity. In former times, the farmer in his ignorance would too often kill his best friends, the small birds, which came into his fields not to rob him, but to destroy his enemies. Thanks to such workers as Miss Ormerod, these mistakes will be corrected. Her recently published *Manual of Injurious Insects, with Methods of Prevention and Remedy*, enables any one to identify an insect by means of pictures for comparison with the captured specimen, and gives directions for stopping its ravages. It forms an interesting book for all, but still more to those for whose use it is principally intended, and to whom it is dedicated, namely, 'the landowners, farmers, foresters, and gardeners of the United Kingdom.'

We recently alluded to the interesting trials

of various machines for drying hay and corn which took place at the Agricultural Society's Show at Reading. We then pointed out that the results of these trials could not be fairly considered until some time had elapsed, and the stacked produce had been thoroughly desiccated. The judges have now made their Report. A prize of one hundred guineas was offered for the best means of drying the material either before or after stacking; and there were eight competitors. It is a disappointment to find that the systems tried have failed; and that the judges report that they do not feel justified in awarding the prize. This result is most surprising, in the face of the letters which have appeared during the last few years in the *Times* and other newspapers testifying to the remarkable results attained by these hay-drying machines. The matter seems to require some explanation.

Some months ago, there was a great outcry among amateur archaeologists to the effect that the Ducal Palace and St Mark's, Venice, were about to receive irreparable damage at the hands of the modern restorer. A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who lately examined the repairs that have been and are being made, sets these alarms at rest. He reports that the old buildings were not only sinking in the soft muddy ground on which they stood, but that the sea-air had disintegrated the stone-work to such a depth that in many places the carvings were quite obliterated. Every particle of stone which it was possible to utilise has in these necessary repairs been retained, and the new work has been executed with such skill that the most fastidious could not object to it. On the whole, our informant considers that the work could not possibly be better done.

A curious observation regarding hailstorms has lately been brought before the Swiss Geographical Societies at Geneva by Herr Riniker, the chief forester of Canton Aargau. He maintains that hailstorms do not occur where there are forests, and instances the case of a small chain of mountains in the south of Aargau known as the Lindenberg which are normally completely covered with trees. About twenty years ago, the forest was divided in two places by wide gaps, and immediately afterwards the valleys were visited by frequent hailstorms. Fourteen years ago the larger of these two open spaces was planted with firs, since which time the hailstorms have entirely ceased. Herr Riniker is inclined to attribute the phenomenon to electric action, suggesting that the hail and trees being charged with opposite kinds of electricity, their union gives rise to sufficient heat to prevent congelation of watery particles. If his deductions should be confirmed by further observation, we shall be able to add one more reason to the many which already exist why forests should to some extent be left as nature designed them.

That many landowners are aware of the importance of this question of tree-planting, more especially in its bearing on the rainfall of a particular district, we must acknowledge. But there are many whose sole idea of the value of timber is governed by the price which it will fetch in the market, and unfortunately such persons do not remember to plant young trees where they cut down old ones. We have

a noble example to the contrary in a former Duke of Athole, who was one of the most extensive tree-planters in the world. It is said that during his useful life he planted no fewer than twenty-seven million trees, covering fifteen thousand acres.

Mr Peter Squire, of St Neots, has lately published a method of dealing with wasps' nests, which seems not only to be novel but effectual. The usual plan of thrusting a sulphureous compound into the nest and leaving it to smoulder, is fraught with some uncertainty; and unless the operation is conducted at night, when the nests are difficult to find, it leads to unpleasant if not dangerous attacks from the enraged insects. Mr Squire's plan is available at any time of day, and consists in dropping into the nest one or two tablespoonfuls of pulverised 'commercial cyanide of potassium.' Unfortunately, this drug is of a deadly character, and it certainly should not be placed in irresponsible hands. The mere suggestion of a tablespoon in such a connection is enough to make any one shudder who is acquainted with the properties of the drug. Still, with great precautions, the plan may be adopted by fruit-growers. The act of dropping the drug into the hole does not disturb the inmates, and those who are abroad afterwards enter never to return. Mr Squire lately had the curiosity to dig up one of the nests so treated. He found in it three thousand four hundred dead wasps, besides a large number of grubs.

The Edison Electric Light Company have after much talk and great preparation at length entered upon their task of illuminating a large portion of New York by their incandescent lamps. It must be some time before we can judge of the real value of this experiment. We know that the lights, so far as they go, are successful; but we do not yet know their cost as ascertained by their lasting properties; neither do we yet know how the new method of illumination will answer when trusted to the hands of the ordinary unskilled householder. That the new system may prove cheaper than gas, is probable, for gas in New York is very dear; but experiments in this country prove on the whole that gas with all its disadvantages is cheaper than the incandescent lamps. But of course there are many people who will be glad to pay more for an illuminant which will respect their books and pictures, and which will not vitiate the air which they breathe.

The Home Office authorities have recently issued rules for the erection of lightning-conductors on all factories and magazines where explosives are dealt with. These rules comprise both the materials which should be selected for the conductors, and the best form of construction; the instructions being based upon the recently published Report of the Lightning-rod Conference. The various rules consider the jointing of the rods, the form of the points, their number and height, the way in which sharp curves should be avoided, the earth-connection, &c. One rule in particular calls attention to a precaution that is very frequently neglected, namely, that all spouts, gutters, iron doors, and other metal-work about the building should, to insure adequate protection, be in electrical connection with the lightning-rod.

M. Tissandier, the well-known author, artist, and

aéronaut, is projecting the manufacture of an elliptical balloon which is to be driven by a dynamo-machine and storage-batteries. The balloon will be a hundred and thirty-one feet long, and will have a capacity of more than a hundred thousand cubic feet. It is calculated to give a lifting-power of three and a half tons, which will, when the machinery is in place, allow for a ton of passengers and ballast. We do not know the precise object of constructing such a machine. That it will in any way add to the solution of the problem of aerial navigation, can hardly be maintained. We know that storage-batteries will turn a dynamo-machine, and we can also imagine that large fans actuated thereby will move such a balloon along, provided that the surrounding air be still. We have no doubt but that such a novel machine hovering over the streets of Paris will make some sensation, but it remains to be seen whether the venture will be of any more solid use.

Colonel Ziegler, who recently brought the subject of badly-made shoes before the Hygienic Congress at Geneva, made some statements of great importance. He stated that the examining surgeons in Switzerland are compelled every year to reject eight hundred recruits simply because their feet have been deformed, and rendered unfit for continued marching by the use of bad shoes. He pointed out that the human foot is naturally a yielding body, which expands and contracts in the most elastic manner with every step. The shoemakers—in entire ignorance of the anatomy of the foot they are called upon to clothe—supply an article which gives rise to corns, which forces the toes all together, and which often positively leads to articular inflammation. 'The test of a perfect pair of shoes is,' said the Colonel, 'that when placed together they should touch only at the toes and the heels; the soles should follow the sinuosities of the feet, and to give room for their expansion, should exceed them in length by from a half to three-quarters of an inch.'

Attempts have been made in this and other countries to introduce shoes answering these conditions, and occasionally we see advertisements to that effect. But it cannot be denied that the large majority of shoemakers go on the old lines, and sell boots and shoes which bear in their shape very little relation to the human foot. Unfortunately, the powerful god of Fashion has laid down the dictum that 'clumsy-looking boots' are to be avoided, and so the five poor toes, whose tips should naturally cover four inches of space, are cramped into two. Ladies' boots are still more wretched in construction, by reason of the high heels now in vogue, which, besides crippling the walker, give her foot the appearance of a hoof. In getting measured for a pair of shoes or boots, the foot should be placed on a sheet of white paper on the floor, and a line should be drawn by the shoemaker round the foot. Thus the contour of the foot is got, and upon this basis the shoemaker should make his last. *Verb. sup.*

In these days of sanitary reforms, we are constantly on the look-out for lurking dangers to life; and the healthy state of our large cities, when compared with those of other countries, is a proof that our precautions meet with abundant reward. Rookeries of tumble-down dwellings are still not unknown among us; but these are gradually

giving way to large colonies of bricks and mortar, where families are lodged in flats, enjoying every improvement that sanitary science can suggest. The different conditions under which people live in other countries can be instanced by reference to San Francisco, where many, if not most of the houses are built on wooden foundations. So much unaccountable disease was lately experienced there, that the doctors began to suspect the houses of harbouring some unlooked-for nucleus of malaria. As a result of their investigations, they found that the woodwork touching the soil favoured in its gradual decay a fungoid growth, which gave lodging to a mass of living organisms. These, it seems, die down when the wood is no longer able to support them, and the decaying mass with its unhealthy emanations forms a source of disease.

Mr J. F. Smith, of Leicester, has suggested a novel method of building bridges either for temporary or permanent use, which seems to have many advantages both in simplicity and cheapness. Iron or steel cylinders, twenty, forty, or more feet in diameter, constructed of plates riveted to rolled iron or steel ribs, are rolled into the stream over which it is desired to carry the bridge. These gigantic cylinders, with half their diameters sunk under water, form so many arches upon which a level road can easily be thrown. The cylinders can be built up on the spot where they are required, or, filled in with a temporary floor at one end, can be readily floated to their destination. The system is expected to be useful in laying railroads across land subject to occasional flood.

Mr Crookes, whose researches concerning electrical discharges in high vacua caused so much excitement in the scientific world a few years back, has had a graceful compliment paid to him by the jury of the Paris Exhibition of Electricity. While regretting that it was out of their power to offer him a prize, they expressed their admiration of his beautiful experiments, and placed upon record their belief that none of the incandescent lamps which are now competing for public favour could have been possible had not Mr Crookes first found out the secret of managing extreme vacua. (Reference to old patent specifications will show that electric lamps on the same principle as those of Edison were contrived many years back; but they failed because their authors could not, by means of the air-pumps then at their disposal, remove the air sufficiently from the glass bulbs in which their incandescent carbon or platinum was contained.)

The proverbial ingenuity of our American cousins is well indicated by a reference to recent statistics gathered from their Patent Office, and while they testify to the industry of the nation, they also show, by the places of origin of different specifications, how the groove in which a man's thoughts are apt to run becomes moulded by the circumstances by which he is surrounded. The New York inventors give their minds principally to mechanical applications and scientific discoveries. From the New England States come contrivances of a labour-saving nature, many of them having reference to ordinary operations of the most trivial character. From the centres of agriculture come inventions relating to harvest operations and the like; while the Rocky Moun-

tains furnish specifications of mining implements. A fair proportion of the seekers after protection are foreigners, of whom by far the greater number hail from this country. Unfortunately, it is a well-ascertained fact that few people who patent their ideas, and who devote the best part of their lives to work which immeasurably benefits their fellow-beings, ever receive any money reward for their exertions. It is calculated that only one in every hundred makes it pay. The proportion of disappointed ones must be much larger in the British Patent Office, for the fees are so great, that many of those who manage to pay the few pounds required as a preliminary, are unable to complete the purchase-money, and thus they forfeit their claim for protection.

From the *Scotsman*, we learn that at various iron-works in Scotland, experiments on different scales have been made in connection with the smelting process, with a view to utilising the waste gases before burning them, by extracting the tar and ammonia which were found to be present in the gases of all blast-furnaces where coal was used as fuel; and after much labour and numerous experiments, Messrs Alexander and McCosh, of the firm of William Baird & Co., Gartsherrie, have successfully solved the problem, in practical form, of extracting the tar and ammonia, as subsidiary products, from their blast-furnaces without in the slightest degree disturbing the process of smelting. Some time ago, a work on a very considerable scale was erected at Gartsherrie iron-works, and it is now in successful operation, recovering the tar and ammonia from blast-furnace gases, which, after passing through the apparatus and parting with their valuable products, are conveyed by piping to different parts of the works, for the generation of steam and other purposes.

At the meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute at Vienna, a paper was read announcing the successful rolling of steel ingots with their own initial heat, by means of what is termed the 'soaking-pit' process. A difficulty to be overcome in rolling a steel ingot into a rail, for instance, was, that the exterior of the heated ingot cooled more quickly than the interior; and expensive means had to be adopted to overcome this difficulty. According to Mr John Giers, of Middlesborough, who read the above paper, this can now be done by simply placing the ingot, as soon as cast, into a pit and covering it over, which practically excluded the air. During this, the 'soaking' operation, a quantity of gas exuded from the ingot, and filled the pit, thus entirely preventing atmospheric air from entering. When the lid was removed, combustion took place. The operation of steel-making on a large scale will by this process be not only very much simplified, but its cost materially reduced.

Mr Thomas Fraser, 84 King Street, Aberdeen, has patented a Corrugated Vent-lining, from the use of which it is hoped that sweeping of vents will be rendered less necessary. These vent-linings may be made of any suitable clay; and the principle of their construction is, that the sharp edges of the folds or corrugations in the interior of the tube being at right angles to the draught of the chimney, the soot will not 'coat up' as on a flat surface, but be carried off by the draught.

BOOK GOSSIP.

It might not unnaturally be thought, from the number of brilliant pens that have attacked the knotty subject of Burns, his life, and his works, that very little had been left for later writers to do. And yet it is surprising to note the variety of view which the subject admits of, and the amount of interesting matter which can be extracted by the 'seeing eye' from the apparently already exhausted material. Professor Nichol of Glasgow is the latest writer on the theme of the Ayrshire Bard (*Robert Burns: A Summary of his Career and Genius*. Edinburgh: William Paterson). The little treatise is intended as an introduction to the edition of Burns issued by this publisher—an edition which is rich in facts relating to the poet's life, though unfortunately weak in the department of purely literary criticism.

Professor Nichol—who was not, however, the editor of this edition—writes his Introductory Notice of the poet with the raciness of style and clearness of literary insight which are his characteristics. Coming after such a galaxy of eminent writers as have already treated the subject—Allan Cunningham, John Gibson Lockhart, Thomas Carlyle, Robert Chambers, and Professor Wilson—Dr Nichol's task was not an easy one. The career and genius of Burns present enormous difficulties to the critic, and only men who approach somewhat to himself in their degree of mental strength and perception, have any chance of successfully grappling with those difficulties. With the exception of Professor Nichol, there has not been, so far as we remember, any one within the last dozen years who, either as biographer or essayist, has shown himself equal to the task. Either we have had weak pictures of the poet, based upon the narrow sympathies of the biographer and an imperfect appreciation of the poet, or we have had microscopic examinations made of some particular phase of his character, with the almost inevitable result of general distortion and unlikeness. Professor Nichol has wisely avoided extremes in the treatment of his subject. He has neither risen into the vague flights of the panegyrist, nor sunk into the bathos of the apologist. He has simply taken the man as he is to be found—not indeed like other men, but rather as a kind of phenomenon among men; and the result is a treatise thoroughly healthy in tone, and fairly accurate in its results.

* *

Mr Robert K. Douglas, Professor of Chinese at King's College, London, has recently issued a very valuable work, entitled *China*, and published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The volume is one that yields a vast quantity of instructive as well as entertaining knowledge of 'far Cathay' and its singular people. The sketch of the history of the Chinese Empire with which the book opens is concise and clear in its details, with enough of interesting bits to carry the reader through the drier chronological passages. According to Professor Douglas, the first records we have of the Chinese represent them as a band of immigrants settling in the north-eastern provinces of the modern empire of China,

and fighting their way amongst the aborigines. It is believed, from the philological evidence afforded by an examination of their language, that these first settlers came from the south of the Caspian Sea, and that the date of their exodus might be about the twenty-fourth or twenty-third century B.C. It would appear also, he says, that the Chinese came into China possessed of the resources of Western Asian culture, bringing with them a knowledge of writing and astronomy, as well as of the arts which primarily minister to the wants and comfort of mankind. We are not, therefore, to confound these early immigrants with barbarians.

In the production of his book, Professor Douglas has evidently availed himself of all the best and latest works on the subject of China; and hence we have therein a clear and succinct synopsis of all that is worth knowing regarding the history of that marvellous country; its government; its systems of education and agriculture; its medicine, music, and architecture; the forms and ceremonies of marriage among the people, their food and dress, their superstitions and funeral rites. There are three chapters of particular interest and value to the general student, namely, those relating to the religions, the language, and the literature of China. It is seldom that so much accurate knowledge combined with picturesque and graphic description, is served up to the public in a form at once so agreeable and convenient.

CONTRASTS.

A snort June night, now brightening fast to dawn;
A house with doors and windows open wide;
A silent sick-room, where a dying man
Lies prostrate in his youth and manhood's pride.

A bird's sweet carol, entering glad and shrill—
A bird that sings of Hope, when Hope has fled;
And the sound smites the watcher with a thrill
Of agony—as if some Voice had said:

'Weep on—and watch! but I shall sing as sweet
Among the roses—though thy dear ones die;
And all the world shall pass with careless feet,
Although *thy* heart be broken utterly!'

O little bird! how tinneful was that lay,
That fell so bitterly on mourners' ears;
Yet it was Summer—and what tongue will say:
'Twere well if Nature too could share *our* tears!'

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COSMIC DUST.

THE constant presence of dust in the air may be demonstrated by the familiar experiment of admitting a beam of sunlight into a dark room. The path of the beam becomes plainly visible owing to the reflection of the light by the myriad particles floating about. Were the air quite pure, of course nothing of the kind would be seen. But to prove that dust also exists in the open air, we must have recourse to a different method. If we cover a plate with a thin coating of glycerine and expose it to a strong wind, numerous particles of matter will be found deposited on its surface. Examined with the microscope, these prove to be pollen-grains from flowers, bits of vegetable fibres and hairs, mineral and rocky fragments of all kinds, and iron. The presence of vegetable and mineral particles is easily explained; but not so the iron. Let us see what we can learn about this singular element in the dust.

Showings of dust are not uncommon occurrences in the neighbourhood of active volcanoes. Mr Edward Whymper witnessed an eruption of Cotopaxi, in which dust and ashes calculated to weigh about two million tons were thrown into the air. But dust-showers of other than volcanic origin have frequently been observed. The first instance of such a one is mentioned by Theophrastus as having occurred in the year 743 A.D., accompanied by a luminous meteor, or fireball, as it is popularly termed. Dr D. P. Thomson cites many cases between 1548 and 1838, in most instances attended by a fireball. The evidence of such dust-falls occurring in past ages is not wanting, nor is the phenomenon confined to any particular part of the earth's surface. Nordenskjöld found particles of metallic iron and nickel in the snow during a snow-storm at Stockholm in December 1871; and in the following year, when exploring the Arctic regions, he discovered similar particles on the Polar ice and in the snows of Finland. Some hailstones which fell in Ireland in 1821 contained a metallic nucleus of iron pyrites. A

like phenomenon occurred in Siberia in the year 1824. Dr T. L. Phipson, and more recently M. Tissandier, exposed glycerined plates to the winds in various localities, and found iron particles deposited on them. In 1879, dust fell in various parts of Sicily and Italy; and about the same time some was got from the snow found in the open fields near Kiel in Germany. Dr Reichenbach, of Vienna, has shown that the dust which covers the tops of mountains and other elevated places contains metallic particles. Finally, magnetic dust was found by Mr John Murray, of H.M.S. *Challenger*, in the dredgings of the sea-bottom.

Arago long ago gave his attention to this metallic dust in the atmosphere, and published his views on the subject in the *Annuaire* for 1832. He said: 'The attentive observation of falls of dust renders it presumable that they are not essentially different from those of the ordinary *aérolites*.' In this opinion the eminent Frenchman has been followed by Reichenbach, Nordenskjöld, Silvestri, and Tissandier, who have each devoted some study to the question; but two dissentients have recently appeared in MM. Tacchini and Von Lasaulx, who state their belief that the so-called cosmic dust is of terrestrial origin. Before examining their grounds for this opinion, let us briefly notice the evidence in favour of this dust being cosmic, that is to say, non-terrestrial.

The similarity between the composition of meteoric dust and that of meteoric stones (*aérolites*) is very remarkable. We do not mean to say that their constituents are identical in every case. Sometimes the dust differs materially from an *aérolite*. But then we must remember that *aérolites* differ among themselves, a substance present in one being found in another in much smaller quantity, or even being absent altogether. This similarity, then, is sufficiently marked to render it extremely improbable that the dust and stones are derived from different sources. Another reason for assuming their intimate relation to one another is to be found in the fact that the fall both of *aérolites* and showers of

non-volcanic dust is generally preceded by the appearance of a fireball. It can hardly be a mere coincidence that in most of the recorded instances of dust-showers the previous appearance of a fireball is mentioned. The identification of our dust with the phenomenon of fireballs is one step. Let us take another. Every night in the year, but more especially on two nights in August and November respectively, what are known as shooting-stars may be seen. On some occasions these shooting-stars have been very large, so large as to assume the exact appearance of fireballs. We have reason to believe that these meteors are small fireballs; and that just as fireballs often burst and scatter stones and dust, the smaller meteors contribute their own share of foreign matter to our atmosphere. Now, are there any celestial bodies to which we may look as the common source of the phenomena of shooting-stars, fireballs, aërolites, and meteoric dust? Without detailing the various steps by which we have arrived at our knowledge, suffice it to state that comets appear to be the denizens of space to which we owe our meteoric phenomena. Olmsted showed that the meteor-showers of August and November diverge from certain fixed points in the heavens, thus indicating their planetary nature; and Schiaparelli, an Italian astronomer, demonstrated the identity of their orbits round the sun with those of certain comets. The fact has thus been established that meteors are due to the earth passing through rings of matter which revolve round the sun in cometary or elliptic orbits, the larger masses of this matter reaching the earth as aërolites, and the smaller ones being frittered into dust by the resistance of the air.

Professor Tacchini, of the Collegio Romano in Rome, has recently analysed the dust which fell in various parts of Sicily and Italy during 1879. The dust was borne on the *sirocco*, a dry wind which blows from the African desert. The examination revealed the presence of the usual constituents—granules of metallic iron, nickel, cobalt, phosphorus, magnesia, &c. The composition of the dust tells us nothing new. But Professor Tacchini has observed that its fall is invariably accompanied by a barometric depression. The full significance of this discovery will be appreciated when we mention that the Professor hangs a theory upon it. The theory we take to be this: Whirlwinds and cyclones in the Sahara raise quantities of dust into the higher regions of the atmosphere; it there remains suspended for several days until transported across the Mediterranean; then a small descending cyclone—the cause of the barometric depression—brings it to the surface of the earth. There can be no difficulty whatever in the way of the acceptance of this explanation, if it be shown that the dust of the Sahara contains the substances found in that deposited by the *sirocco*. Tacchini attempts to do this. Nordenskjöld's discovery of native iron in Greenland affords the clue. If metallic iron occurs in Greenland and elsewhere, why should it not do so in the Sahara, and thus supply the metallic, or so-called meteoric, element in the dust? We shall return to this question directly.

Nordenskjöld, in the dust which he collected in the Arctic regions, found certain small white

grains, which he described as 'cryoconite.' It was partly from the presence of these grains that he inferred its origin to be cosmic, and consequently not pertaining to our earth. Silvestri found spherules of iron with nickel in some dust that fell at Catania, and assumed from that circumstance that it must be meteoric. Specimens of the cryoconite and the Catanian dust, together with some obtained from the snow near Kiel, were recently submitted to the eminent mineralogist, Von Lasaulx; and that gentleman, as the result of his examination, has announced his opinion that the dust is not of cosmic origin at all, but simply detritus derived from the rocks on the earth's surface. The cryoconite he found to be principally composed of quartz and mica, two minerals which are almost unknown in meteorites. There were no mineral particles present which would indicate a cosmical origin. Hence he concludes that 'the dust may undoubtedly have come from the gneiss region of the coast of Greenland.' The constituents of which the Catanian dust was made up were, with the exception of the iron particles, such as might have their origin within Sicily. Mount Etna would supply the augite and olivine crystals found in it. Finally, in the dust brought from Kiel there was no trace of minerals which would indicate a non-terrestrial origin, with the exception of a few particles of metallic iron which could be attracted with the magnet. 'If we now group the observations of the various dust-masses precipitated from the atmosphere, it first appears that, in nearly their whole mass, these varieties of dust consist of mineral particles which may be very well regarded as a detritus of rocks more or less near. Only the metallic iron, present always, but in very small quantity, can be considered cosmic.' Having arrived at this conclusion, M. Von Lasaulx goes on to prove how the presence of metallic iron does not necessarily indicate a cosmic origin. The masses of iron found at Ovilak in Greenland were, in the opinion of many authorities, of terrestrial origin; and if that assumption were reasonable in the case of large blocks, it must be equally so in the case of dust.

It will be observed that both our authors find a difficulty in accounting for the presence of iron particles in atmospheric dust, and that they get over the difficulty by referring to the Ovilak masses discovered by Nordenskjöld in 1870. Tacchini supposes that similar matter may exist in the sands of the Sahara; and Von Lasaulx assumes that the blocks are volcanic, and that iron dust may therefore be of terrestrial origin also. Both observers seem to have completely forgotten the reasons why Steenstrup, Dr Lawrence Smith, and others came to the conclusion that the Ovilak iron was terrestrial. One of the reasons was this, that carbon was invariably combined with the Greenland iron, and as invariably absent from meteoric iron. So of course the Ovilak masses do not throw the least light upon the presence of meteoric iron particles in atmospheric dust. Were the composition of the Greenland native iron and that found in meteorites and meteoric dust identical, we would be forced to conclude either that it had all a common cosmic origin, or was all derived from terrestrial sources; but the difference observed permits, if

it does not compel us to assign the Ovifak blocks and meteoric iron to entirely different sources. The one was reduced by the action of organic matters (hydrocarbons); the other comes to us from the realms of space.

Until Arago took up the subject, the precipitation of dust from the air seems to have excited but little interest. At the present time, it is receiving some attention from scientific men. In 1879, Mr Ranyard presented a paper to the Royal Astronomical Society giving a detailed account of the known observations on meteoric dust previous to that date; and in the following year a Committee was appointed by the British Association for the double purpose of examining past observations, and discussing the best means of prosecuting more systematic investigations in the future. The Report of this Committee was read by Professor Schuster at the meeting of the Association at York, the principal point dealt with being the method of observation to be pursued. The first point to be determined is the approximate quantity of dust which falls within a given time. An instrument suitable for this purpose, devised by Dr Pierre Mignel, was described in the *Annuaire de Montsouris* for 1879. An aspirator draws a quantity of air through a fine hole, the stream impinging on a plate coated with glycerine, which retains all solid particles. The volume of air drawn in being known, the relative proportion of solid matter is easily got. A second, less accurate, but more portable form of the instrument was also described. The aspirator is dispensed with, and a weathervane substituted, which always directs the opening against the wind. The solid matter is retained by means of a glycerine plate, as in the other form. An anemometer placed in the immediate vicinity shows approximately the volume of air that has passed through the apparatus. The most difficult matter in using these aëroscopes, as they are called, is the selection of a suitable locality. The place ought to be as free as possible from ordinary dust. Some spot in mid-ocean would do very well; but uninterrupted observations for any length of time would be almost impossible there. An elevated station in the Alps is a more likely place, and should such a station be established, we may hope for valuable results concerning this vexed question.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XLIII.—THE HORROR OF THE VENGEANCE HIS ENEMY HAD PURPOSED LEFT VAL UNHINGED AND TERROR-STRIKEN.

MORNING broke bright and beautiful. 'Mr Search, Mr Search,' said the captain, with a half-comic, half-serious glance at Hiram, 'somebody's been steering a queer course lately.'

'We went out a point or two to look at that yacht,' said Hiram shiftily.

'And lost your reckoning afterwards,' said the captain. 'I thought you were better sailors, both of you. Might be running for Odessa this way rather than Alexandria.'

'Well,' returning Hiram, feigning ill-temper,

'you can steer the ship yourself, captain. I reckon it's your business.'

The genial old skipper stared after him as he left the deck. 'What makes him so sore all of a sudden?' he wondered. But he never spoke again of the night's wayward steering, and perhaps that served Hiram Search's turn.

As for Gerard, he showed little difference of manner. Hiram, when he was left alone, and the *Mew's-wing* had faded out of sight in the gray mist of morning, found time to think matters over, and came to the conclusion that he would have to encounter one of two things—a passionate and profound resentment, or a gratitude equally passionate and profound. Gerard gave sign of neither the one nor the other, but met him almost as if nothing had happened. 'British again,' said Hiram; but Gerard's behaviour was not the less bewildering to him that he pretended thus lightly to find a solution for it.

Meantime, aboard the *Mew's-wing* there was amazement and dread. Every man aboard had known the story of their owner's treachery to his friend in some garbled and distorted form. But Val from the first gathering of the crew together had been a favourite with them all, and in their eyes the elopement had been the triumph of true love over unknown obstacles. The rough fellows liked Romance, like the rest of the world; and Constance, who could be haughty and cold enough to social equals, had never been anything but gracious and kindly to those below her; and had, by dint of her regal beauty and her gentleness, enlisted all these hearts at once. They could not tell why she and Val had parted, but they talked about the parting, and thought about it, and had queer stories to explain it. Gerard had been once aboard the *Mew's-wing*, and in the awful moment when the steam yacht crossed her, Val was not the only man who recognised him. The wild cry of the look-out had brought them all on deck; and the look-out himself had seen the struggle at the wheel, and had beheld the blow which saved the yacht and every soul on board. The men talked these things over, and by-and-by murmurs of rage and fear began to rise amongst them. After a while, they came forward in a body, and setting forth their spokesman, demanded, through him, to be run into the nearest port and there disbanded.

'Us thinks, sir,' said the spokesman, respectfully but firmly, 'as after what took place this morning, no man's life's safe aboard this craft.'—A murmur of assent encouraged him.—'It's clear the party meant to run us down; an' him being steam, an' us being canvas, the odds is all agen us. All fair an' proper risks us is willing to run, sir, but not that. Some of us is married, an' some of us ain't; but us has all got our lives to look after, an' what us says is: "Make a clean run for the nearest port, pay us our dues, an' leave us to shift for ourselves."—That's it, I think, my lads?'

That was it, said a rough murmur from behind him. The horror of the vengeance his enemy had purposed left Val unHINGED and terror-stricken. He was not a coward; but in view of the deadly hatred Gerard's attempt bespoke, his

common courage left him. It was scarcely likely, he told himself, that he would long escape a revenge so ready to stick at nothing; but even at the push of desperation, he could not feel justified in dragging all these people into his own risk. He gave way without a word of protest.

'My lads,' he said, 'I cannot say that I share your belief; but since you hold it, I will let you have your way.'

'Not share the belief, sir?' said the skipper. 'Why, Thomson saw the struggle, and you know what the moonlight was. You don't mean to say you think they didn't see us?'

'You may be sure of this, Soulsby,' said Val, as quietly as he could—'since the struggle did take place, the attempt will not be repeated. You don't suppose that any crew would allow their vessel to run another down, do you?'

'There's some comfort in that reflection, sir,' said the skipper; and he passed the consolatory question to the mate, who passed it to the men. They agreed that one bloodthirsty madman would be as many as any one boat would be likely to carry at a time, and found satisfaction in the belief that by this time the late helmsman was probably in irons. 'You'll report this to the consul when we land, of course, sir?'

'I don't see what good that would do, Soulsby,' said Val.

'Well, sir,' returned the skipper, 'if you don't, I shall. And there'll be such a look-out kept aboard this boat as never was kept before; and if the gentleman tries his game again, I'm a reasonably good shot, and I shall have a fairish try to bring him down. I set a value on my life, sir,' he concluded, and walked away indignantly.

No other attempt was made; and the sharpest look-out which could be kept failed to sight the *Channel Queen*. But the skipper kept his word, and reported the affair to the British consul when they reached their port; and the official sent for Val, and was for taking it up at once, as an unheard-of outrage. Val pooch-pooched the whole business.

'I never came near such a set of old women in my life,' he declared. 'The man at the wheel and some other fool were fighting, and only saw us just in time to clear us.'

'But your sailing-master tells me that he heard the man threaten you by name,' said the consul. '"I shall run you down, Val Strange," or words to that effect, were used, he swears.'

'Why not, "If you're not run down, it's strange?"' questioned Val readily. He had been prepared for this.

The consul burst out laughing, and admitted that this reading was the likeliest of the two. After all, he said, Mr Strange was the interested party, and not the skipper. The skipper called once more to know what was being done; and the consul told him briefly and with some scorn what colour the yacht's owner had put upon the matter.

'It's well known to all of us,' said the skipper, 'who the man was that tried to run us down, and what was his reason for it. Mr Strange ran away with the lady he was to marry and married her himself; and as to the words, I'll swear to 'em before judge and jury.'

In effect, the skipper went away in high anger.

The consul told him that he was an insolent and cross-grained fellow, and was himself left a good deal puzzled by the business. He felt bound to accept Val's view of it, however; and the skipper being paid to the uttermost farthing, went to England in the first homeward-bound vessel, a little mollified, but not to be converted from his own belief. He was, however, a man of discretion, and had many grounds of gratitude to his late employer, and held his tongue between his teeth, therefore. Jacky Tar in general being discharged at his own desire, and plentifully supplied with money, sought his own joys and had his fling, and thought no more about his narrow escape than to make a fo'ble yarn of it.

The reason for Val's conduct was not far to seek, though it was somewhat complex. He admitted the gigantic wrong he had done against his friend, and was not so blind an egotist that he could not understand the injured man's longing for the wild justice of revenge. There was a feeling in his mind, too, that since he had left Gerard without any legal remedy an honourable man might try for, he was bound to accept the risk of any illegal remedy he might seek; and there was thus a sense in his mind that to ask the protection of the law would be base beyond anything he had done already. That is a sense in which I suppose that any high-minded man who will fancy himself in Val Strange's place will not find it difficult to share. And beyond these, which were more than sufficient for him, lay another reason: nothing could have been done, even had he willed it, without the introduction of Constance's name. Any one link in this chain might have served to hold him motionless.

The breach between himself and his wife was not a severance of love, but a confession of remorse. No man sins against his own high instincts with impunity; but there are some who are of fibre tough enough to long for pardon and yet retain the offence. But Val and Constance in the ordinary course of circumstance should have been blameless people, leading lovable lives, and as happy as this hard world will allow to the happiest. He wrote to her sad short letters, telling her he was here or there, and bound here or there; and she answered as shortly and as sadly. But now, to his surprise, came a letter, urging him to return to her. He left his yacht in charge of the agent of an English shipping firm, instructing him to sell her, and took ship for Naples. May was drawing near, and all the exquisite country was in rich bloom. The Chiaja was crowded in the tranquil evenings; and there were trips to Posillipo by land, and trips to San Giovanna's Palace by moonlight, by water; and the gay southern city had fairly begun its long season of summer joys. Val had expected to be asked to share in these, and had with heavy heart braced himself to bear the burden of festivity; but he found Constance pale and languid and unlike her old self. She had news for him which would have revived his old tenderness had it needed revival, and which brought him to her feet again with a flush of something like the old rapturous delight. His joy and tenderness and fear melted her reserve, and this new meeting was the happiest moment of their brief and troubled wedded life.

'We may still be happy,' she murmured,

caressing his head as he knelt beside her. 'Let us make the best of life, Val. Let us be apart no more.'

'We will not part again,' said Val, with tears in his eyes, 'until death parts us.'

'Hush!' she answered, laying a hand upon his lips. 'Do not talk of that, Val.'

He was constant in his attendance upon her, and found her more than commonly full of those forebodings and presentiments which are common to women in her situation. He did not even know that they were common; and though he fought against them, and smiled them down in her presence, they weighed upon him heavily, and he had a horrible fear that they would be fulfilled. If she would have permitted it, he would have had every physician in the city in attendance upon her; though, with a touch of British prejudice, he despised them all, and would have had more confidence in an English medical student freshly dressed in the glories of a diploma. It chanced that a young English surgeon of great promise, though as yet of inconsiderable note, was at that time in Naples, whither he had accompanied, all the way from England, an elderly aristocrat, who had chosen to think himself ill, and now preferred to think himself cured of a complaint which had never ailed him. But the noble feeble Earl so enthusiastically cried the praises of his *medico*, in whose society he had chosen to cast off his fancied malady, that Val, hearing of him, eagerly got a letter of introduction to my lord, and from him an introduction to the young doctor. The doctor wanted to return to England, and was well pleased to find employment on the way. Val had a great desire that his child should be born at home, and Constance shared it. The doctor gave it as his opinion that she would do best to travel by sea, and if possible, by short stages. So they sailed for Marseilles, and lingered there a day or two, and then found a vessel bound for Cadiz, and sailed thither in exquisite summer weather, with scarce a heave upon the sea. Little Mary accompanied them, of course. She had written many letters to Hiram, bemoaning her own wickedness, and giving her own small impressions of foreign parts. Hiram had responded in clerly hand and periods rhetorical. When Hiram set pen to paper, he lost all the raciness characteristic of his speech, and modelled himself apparently on the dullest of newspaper leaders. 'I will not,' he wrote with most judicial and unloverlike gravity, 'attempt to add to the weight of your contrition by reproaching you for the part you have played in this lamentable tragedy. But I am attached by ties, which I will not pause to catalogue, to Mr Gerard Lumby, and I will not leave him until the wounds he has endured are cicatrised by time. You will see, therefore, that your own conduct holds us apart for an indefinite period.'

At first the very English of his epistle crushed its recipient. But it was so unlike Hiram, that she believed in her inmost heart that its severity was assumed; and this conviction, strengthened by desire, held her poor little heart alive. Like wiser people, she believed what was pleasant to believe; but in this matter she had the truth at least partly on her side. In Hiram's eyes, she had done wrong; but he had heard the argument by which she had been persuaded, and he knew

something of the struggle she had gone through. And he was, besides, one of those misguided people who have a mighty idea of the supremacy of the male creature in marriage; and like a good many others, he could be amazingly resolute—on paper. Of late, Hiram's letters had almost ceased; but she knew that he too was in foreign parts; and even that, though she could not hope to meet him, seemed vaguely to bring him nearer. She was immensely attached to Constance, who treated her with unvarying kindness; and altogether she was perhaps the least unhappy of the quintet whom the runaway match affected.

OBITUARY CURIOSITIES.

TIME was when people were content to wait a month to know how things were going in the world, and looked to the magazine, quite as much as the newspaper, for enlightenment on that head, an expectation in which they were not disappointed. A hundred years ago, the doings at court and in parliament, naval and military despatches, the results if not the details of criminal trials, theatrical criticisms, commercial statistics, and notifications of births, marriages, and deaths—lightened with a column or two of poetical effusions, were the staple contents of the periodical publications of the day, as represented by the *Gentleman's*, the *Scots*, and the *European* magazines. Announcements of births, marriages, and deaths were then accepted as gratuitous contributions, and the last mentioned were often expanded into biographical paragraphs, much more amusing and interesting than the curt advertisements familiar to modern eyes.

Dobbs, sexton of Ross, dying in 1798, aged eighty-seven, is described as the only inhabitant of the place having any recollection of the person or manners of John Kyrle, the Man of Ross. There was much ringing, singing, and drinking at his interment, the ceremonies commencing at noon, 'and the clock had told three in the morning before the tears of the tankard were dried up.' No such unseemly merry-making attended the obsequies of Thomas Bond of Lichfield, 'the original of Scrub in the *Beaux Stratagem*,' or those of 'Mr Psalmanazar, well known in many ingenious performances in different parts of literature,' who died in August 1763, many years after he created a sensation by the publication of his fictitious *History of Formosa*.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of July 1799, we read: 'At Bristol Hot Wells, Anthony Morris Storer, Esq., of Devonshire Street, and Turley, Bucks. A man whose singular felicity it was to excel in everything he set his hand and heart to, and who deserved in a certain degree, if any one ever did since the days of Crichton, the epithet of Admirable. He was the best dancer, the best skater of his time, and beat all his competitors at gymnastic honours. He excelled, too, as a musician and a disputant, and, very early, as a Latin poet. In short, whatever he undertook, he did it *con amore*, and as perfectly as if it were his only accomplishment. He was polite in his conversation, elegant in his manners, and amusing in a high degree or otherwise, in the extreme, as he felt himself and his company.'

Twelve years afterwards, Mr Urban records that the world had lost a feminine paragon, by the

death, at the age of twenty-one, of Miss Anne Butters; a young lady of delightful disposition and polished manners, who was conversant alike with ancient history, and the annals of her own country and of modern Europe; had an extraordinary acquaintance with geography, biography, and chronology, was alive to the charms of French literature, but enriched her imagination, strengthened her judgment, and refined her taste by perusing our own classics and poets. She was proficient at drawing, a beautiful writer, an admirable dancer; and when she played the piano, the effects produced by her correctness of judgment, delicacy of ear, and skillfulness of hand, were not unfrequently heightened by the clearness and melody of her voice. Some lucky man had won the heart and hand of this peerless maiden; 'but alas, she had a heart too susceptible of the fine feelings of our nature. The too eager contemplation of the supposed scenes of future happiness which had recently opened upon her mind, the powerful effect produced by the consequent congratulations of her friends, and by regret at leaving a parental roof, gave rise to a nervous affection of the mind, which speedily terminated in her death.'

Anticipations regarding the future had not in the same degree troubled the mind of Barbara Wilson, 'a virtuous old maid,' who died at Whittingham, East Lothian, in 1772, after enjoying single-blessedness for a hundred and twenty years! She was the hen-wife of Alexander Hay, Esq., and 'was so remarkable a genealogist of her feathered flock, as to be able to reckon to the tenth generation.' In testimony of her uncommon merit, her remains were conveyed to the grave by a large assembly of females, uniformly dressed, no male creature being permitted to join in the procession.

Tom Brown, of Garstang, had as great a contempt for mankind as Barbara Wilson herself. 'An occasional assistant in the kitchen of the neighbouring gentry, he could either please their tastes or mend their soles with any man of his day; but Tom would neither mend nor make for the lords of the creation; he would only take the measure of a female foot. A short time before his demise, he selected thirty-six of his feminine acquaintances to attend his funeral; and devised every penny he possessed to his female relatives.'

A formidable list of centenarians might be compiled from the obituary columns of old magazines; but we will content ourselves with mentioning two, Isabella Sharpe and William Haseline. The last-named died in 1733, being then the oldest pensioner in Chelsea College. He well might be, if he had really attained the age of a hundred and twelve years and six months; after fighting for the Parliament at Edgehill, for King William in Ireland, and for Queen Anne in Flanders. There can be no question as to his courage, since he wedded and buried two wives after passing his century, and at the age of a hundred and ten took a third helpmate, who survived him. Besides his allowance from the College, this undeniable veteran had an income of ten shillings a week; one crown coming from the Duke of Richmond's pocket, and the other from that of Sir Robert Walpole. Isabella Sharpe was a widow, dwelling in Gateshead, where she died on the 17th of August 1812; and we are

told that, according to the baptismal register of the parish, she was christened on the 17th of August 1698—exactly a hundred and fourteen years before—having lived during parts of the seventeenth and nineteenth, and through the whole of the eighteenth century! We cannot vouch for the truth of these instances of longevity; but, if we must not believe in them, what are we to think of this paragraph in a London paper of April 9, 1882?—'Mary Simms, who would have been a hundred and eight years of age next month, died at the workhouse at Portsmouth on Wednesday. Her husband and father were soldiers, the former being present at Waterloo. The authenticity of her age has been established by War Office records.'

Mr Guy, sometime rector of Little Coates, Lincolnshire, is credited with being the father, by two wives, of twenty-six sons and eight daughters. How many descendants the septuagenarian saw, the record sayeth not. Maria Sproutt, blessed only with two children, left behind her, at the age of ninety-five, fifteen grandchildren, forty great-grandchildren, and ten great-great-grandchildren; while the funeral of one Janet Cameron was attended by four generations of her descendants, numbering just two hundred.

Recording the death, in 1762, of the Hon. John Petre, Mr Urban informs us that this younger brother of Lord Petre was the eighteenth member of the family that had died of smallpox in the space of twenty-seven years. In 1798, was 'executed, behind his own meeting-house, at Grey-Abbey, near Belfast, in Ireland, for treason, the Rev. James Porter, a dissenting minister. His head was *not* severed from his body.' In the same year, Sergeant Mackay, of the Royal Edinburgh Volunteers, went over to the majority prematurely. 'The cause of his death originated in the treatment he received at the barbarous amusement frequent in that city on His Majesty's birthday called "making burghers;" at which time, and from the same cause, a gentleman of the royal corps of artillery unfortunately received his death.' More mysterious was the demise of the landlady of the *Three Stags*, in St George's Fields, London. Indulging in an afternoon nap behind the bar, she dreamed she saw herself come into a room in which she was sitting, and that she spoke to and shook hands with her second self. Whether it was her *eidolon* or not, certain it is that the next morning she was taken ill and died in a quarter of an hour. A Mrs Johnson went off without even that much warning, dying 'suddenly as she sat in her chair, and next day her husband as suddenly.' Even more of one mind were a Yorkshire pair, who were born on the same day, died nearly at the same hour, and—but that was a matter of course—were deposited in the same grave!—a notification that would have befitted the announcement: 'At Prescott, Lancashire, Mrs Blakesley, aged a hundred and eight; Mrs Chorley, aged ninety-seven; and Mrs Bennet, aged seventy-five; they were intimate acquaintances, and all died within the space of twelve hours.'

On the 9th of December 1736, Basingstoke churchyard received the remains of a zealous churchwoman, Dame Box. 'When Dr Sacheverel

was cleared from his troubles, she clothed herself in white, and kept the same clothes by her, and was buried in them. During the Doctor's life, she constantly went to London once a year, and carried with her a dozen larks, as a present to that high-flying priest. Her corpse was adorned with oaken boughs, in memory of King Charles II. This loyal lady was not quite so provident as a gentleman whose coffin of heart of oak covered with red leather was made long before it was wanted. Such preparation for the end is not so unusual as one might suppose. A rector of Plympton not only bespoke his coffin six weeks before he needed it, but at the same time ordered the building of a vault, visiting the workmen every day until their work was completed. Mr Brookman was buried in an oak chest made for the purpose four years previously. Two days before his death, he walked with the undertaker to the churchyard to show him exactly where he wished to be laid; returning home, he had his chest out, superintended the cleansing of it, and that accomplished to his satisfaction, took to his bed and died. John Moody, who lived long enough to be called the Father of the English Stage, directed that his body should be interred in the burial-ground of St Clement's, Portugal Street, and a headstone set on his grave inscribed: 'Native of this parish, and an old member of Drury Lane Theatre. For his professional abilities, see Churchill's *Rosciad*; and for his memoirs, see the *European Magazine*.' He did not trouble to insure a libation to his memory, like the ancient Lumber-trooper, who served forty years in that distinguished corps, and bequeathed the troopers a crooked guinea, to be spent in punch and tobacco on the day he was laid under the turf.

There is something extraordinary in a man being successively condemned to suffer hanging, amputation, and transportation, and yet undergoing none of these penalties. Such was the fortune of George Chippendale. Sentenced to be hanged, he was respited, in order to have his leg cut off, to try the effect of a newly invented styptic. For some reason, the experiment was not tried, and he was 'pardoned, on condition of being transported for life;' a condition he evaded by dying in Newgate in 1763. John Dodley, of Worcester, experienced an unexpected deliverance of another kind. Born with a contraction of the tendons on one of his legs, he was obliged to wear an artificial limb for thirty years. One day, endeavouring to adjust a church-bell which happened to remain inverted, the rope pulled him up with such velocity as to break the bands that fastened his artificial limb, and in the same instant relaxed the tendon of the 'game' leg, thus rendering it as useful as its fellow for the remainder of his life, which extended to ninety years.

In 1798 there died in the Borough a man known by the name of Leeds. Once an officer in the army, he sold out to become a tea-dealer. Finding the occupation not to his liking, he entered the Russian service, but happening to kill a brother-officer in a duel, fled to England, where he was glad to earn a living by keeping the books of an eminent woollen-dealer. Sent adrift again by his employer's death, Leeds opened a chandler's shop, a venture ending in bankruptcy;

and after many chances and changes, turned cobbler, and plied the awl to the last—a melancholy example of the vicissitudes of human life.

THE HERRING-FISHERY IN ICELAND.

THOUGH the land in Iceland produces little except the grass which nourishes such animals as subsist thereon, yet the seas around it, and the lakes and rivers within it, teem with fish of various kinds. The fisheries for salmon, cod, herring, sharks, and whales are prosecuted with much vigour, though with varying success. Unfortunately, however, for the prosperity of the island, those engaged in these fisheries are not natives, but mostly strangers. For instance, the French cod-fishery around the Iceland coast is very extensive, and is carried on in large schooners and *chasses-mardes*, which receive a bounty from their government on all fish proved to be caught there. A fine nursery is also thus encouraged for the training of seamen. Many English and Shetland smacks are likewise so engaged.

While the native Icelanders were until 1874 compelled to fish in small open boats, they are now liberated from the thralldom in which they were held under the monopolies granted to trading Companies of Danes by the Danish government, and have got one or two decked vessels; but this branch of their industry will take some time to develop. They have, however, the shark-fishing and salmon-fishing in their own hands; but the former is not very remunerative, and they are under obligation to strangers for the disposal of the latter, and so cannot by any means get the full advantage of the markets. The whale-fishing, while worth prosecuting, was in the hands of Americans; but they nearly extirpated the 'black' whale along the coast ten or twelve years ago, and the other varieties are not worth the trouble of capturing.

The herring-fishing has always been in the hands of the Norwegians; and, strange to say, although so much used and so much valued as an article of food by all nations in the north of Europe, the herring never has been, and is not now an article of food with the Icelanders. The only plausible reason which can be adduced for this, is the Icelanders' objection to salt—due to their fear of scurvy. All their preserved provisions are cured fresh either by drying or smoking, or pickled by souring; but herring cannot be cured without salt, on account of the large quantity of oil they contain.

As is well known, the herring has frequent and erratic migrations from and to different parts of the same coast; sometimes leaving the coast of a country altogether for a period, as was the case a good many years ago on the Norwegian fjords. Some such event may indeed have been the primary cause of Norwegians going to fish in Icelandic waters, though the exact period when they began to do so cannot be exactly fixed. There they could fish in the same manner as in their own fjords; for, as stated to the writer by Captain Otto Wathne—engaged in the Iceland fishery on his own account—they [the Norwegians] will catch the fish if they come up to their very doors asking

to be caught; but they have not the enterprise of your Scotch fishermen, to go far out to sea in search of them at great risk in all weathers. And yet they are hardy sailors.

The herrings are all caught in the fjords, none in the open sea. The Norwegian ships that come to Iceland are generally schooners, having the necessary complement of salt and barrels on board. After their arrival, they are partially dismantled and laid up at anchor, having first landed the curing materials at their various stations. These stations are mere wooden sheds built on the shore, and partly projecting into the water, with a platform or jetty on the side next the sea for discharging the fishing-boats. They are always situated where deep water comes close inshore, so that vessels may be loaded by a gangway from the jetty and still be afloat, the rise and fall of the tide in the north and east being only three feet.

The fishing-boats brought from Norway are smaller than those in use on our coasts, but larger than those of the Icelanders; and are fitted with mast, spritsail, and jib, all very light, as they are not expected to meet very heavy weather. The net is in one piece—a seine-net—with which the herrings are swept towards the shore. Should it contain more than the boats can carry, the ends of the net are anchored ashore, and the boats are loaded with as much as they can carry from within by bag-nets on the end of long poles; the remainder of the fish remaining safely enclosed in the net all alive for days until they are wanted, or the contents exhausted. The nets are of various sizes—from twenty fathoms long by five fathoms deep, to a hundred and fifty fathoms long by twenty fathoms deep, and are in use according to the depth of water at the shore to be fished. The nets are only of half-inch mesh, and are used in Norway for sprats and herring alike.

The fish when landed are at once packed *entire* with salt in the barrels, not gutted as with us. Although their curing is not so good as ours, this system involves less labour, besides less handling of the fish, which consequently are less broken. A good many Icelanders are employed to assist the Norwegians, but only as labourers for hire, whether in the boats, or loading vessels at the stations.

The period and direction of the Icelandic shoal, or *drave* as it is called in Scotland, seems to be identical with that of the Scotch—namely, from May and June on to September and October, and from the west coast round the north to the east coast. The northern part of their progress is at times within, and at times without, the line of the Arctic Circle; but they do not enter all the fjords on their line of march, seeming to avoid those which have either a shelving beach, or obstructions in the shape of sandbanks, rocks, or islands. Their favourite haunts are fjords having a clear sweep of deep water quite up to the shore. Of the former class are Hrutafjord, Skagafjord, and Eyafjord on the north, where there are no fishing-stations; yet in the first mentioned, where there is the trading-station of Borgeyri—by which name the fjord often goes—Captain John Coghill, the travelling agent for Messrs. Simon of Leith, who have developed a most extensive trade between Britain and Iceland,

saw the beach of the fjord on one occasion, a few years ago, piled for miles with dead herrings. The fish had been chased up the fjord by a shoal of whales, and had gone ashore in their terror. A similar thing occurred at Crail on the Firth of Forth between forty and fifty years ago; and being before the time of railways, the fish could not all be used, and had to be carted away for manure.

Eyafjord is not a favourite resort of the herring; but at Akureyri, the northern capital of Iceland, on 29th June 1880, the writer saw a few dozens hauled out opposite the hotel window. This was at the south or upper end of the fjord, from twenty-two to twenty-five miles from the Arctic Ocean, in comparatively shallow water. The fish were small—seven and eight inches long, but very delicate, and of fine flavour.

The herrings appear first off Isafjord, on the north-west of Iceland, in May or June, but varying in different years. The *drave*, coasting along the northern shores, proceeds round Langanaes (Longnose), the north-east point of Iceland, and down the east coast, but never on the south and south-west coasts. Sometimes by the end of August, always in September, they may be found in nearly all the eastern fjords, notably Eskjafjord and Seydisfjord, on which latter fjord the writer had, in the first week of October of the above year, an opportunity of observing the operations.

Seydisfjord is one and a quarter to one mile and a half wide, runs straight west for ten to twelve miles, and turns south three to four miles at its head, being inclosed by steep mountains, two thousand five hundred to three thousand feet high, all the way round on both sides, with deep water close inshore all along, except at the head and north-west corner, where it shelves a little, from the detritus brought down by the rivers at these places.

The placid waters reflecting the piled-up mountains give at first glance no indication of the life beneath. A large patch here and there inshore of white sea-birds, or the occasional splutter of a few herring-whales and young finners (rorquals), which do not spout very high, are all there is to tell that the water teems with fish of all sorts. No crowd of boats arriving in the morning and sailing in the evening; neither shouts nor laughter at landing-places; no hurry or bustle; and no need; the game is in their own hands, and they can regulate their work at will, whether to haul and cure, or to ship, as suits convenience; all very quietly—much diligence, but no hurry. All hands on board our steamer who can muster a line and a piece of herring for bait, are hauling in as fast as they can, cod, halibut, flounders, and halibut. Even a fine wolf-fish is sometimes so caught. Some of the officers, in a boat some distance from the steamer, hauled from forty to fifty large cod with four hooks in three hours. But this is a bagatelle. The water is alive with herrings. Where those sea-birds are sitting fishing at leisure, they are in absolutely solid masses, hemmed in by the enormous nets, one hundred and fifty fathoms by twenty fathoms. All their large nets are down; and they try to increase their number by sewing several of the smaller ones together; but not being deep enough—only five fathoms—to take the ground, are of

no use. Sailing-vessels are coming in; but they are too slow. Three steamers were at anchor for herrings on September 26, loaded up and left; the first of another detachment steamed up the fjord on October 9, and so on until the harvest was reaped.

The fish are very large—thirteen, thirteen and a half, and fourteen inches long, actual measurement, and weigh from twelve to fourteen ounces each. The gulls have some difficulty in getting proper hold for swallowing them. If by the head, they are all right, though costing a mighty effort to swallow. Many fish are found with the skin scratched off their backs by the bills of the birds, in the vain attempt to swallow them so held.

Upon inquiring whether the fish did not deteriorate in quality by being kept so long in captivity, say six weeks, and although alive, virtually without food; the answer was, that they were so very fat that there was no appreciable difference, at least in a commercial point of view. They are very fat and well flavoured, but have not the delicacy of flavour or texture of the smaller herring either in Iceland or Scotland. Such fish—small and fine—when found by the Norwegians, are quite as carefully treated in gutting and curing as by us, if not more so, the Norwegians being quite epicurean in their tastes as regards herrings.

THE ENFIELD COURT ROBBERY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'WHEN are you going to return Lady Dasent's visit, Aunt Frances?' asked my niece Amy one lovely morning in August. 'It is quite a fortnight since she called.'

'In a day or so,' I replied, knowing the duty must be performed, particularly as Lady Dasent had, since she called, sent us an invitation to a ball which was about to take place at Enfield Court. In my inmost heart I should have been pleased had Lady Dasent's visit never been paid. We had lived in seclusion for so long, that I almost dreaded any interruption to the even tenor of our quiet existence. But Amy was eighteen, and just at the age to appreciate a little gaiety; and I felt it was my duty to set my own feelings aside, and allow her to enjoy the present to the utmost.

We lived just on the outskirts of one of the principal southern provincial towns, in a little paradise which some one had aptly designated the 'Wren's Nest.' I thought it perfect, and would not have exchanged its peaceful beauty for Enfield itself, which was considered one of the finest places in the county.

Owing to Lord Dasent's very delicate health, the family had been absent for some years; but directly they returned, Lady Dasent had called on us. The Court was barely a mile distant by road, and we were really their nearest neighbours. It behoved me, therefore, for Amy's sake, to make an effort and return her visit.

'What do you think of our going to Enfield this afternoon, Amy?' I said presently.

'I think it would be delightful,' she replied. 'Shall we walk or drive?'

'Drive, decidedly,' I rejoined. The day was

lovely, and I inwardly hoped that Lady Dasent might be enjoying its beauties herself, and that we might thus continue our drive, having done our duty by leaving cards only. But my hopes were disappointed. Lady Dasent was at home; and we were ushered with due ceremony into her beautiful drawing-room, where we found her most graciously inclined towards us both.

Her daughters were playing lawn-tennis, she told us. Would we like to join them on the terrace? Very gladly would I have declined; but a glance towards Amy decided me otherwise. Very probably, my diminutive groom and ponies would be entertained hospitably during our detention; and I could quite fancy, after the splendours of Enfield, that Joseph would return home signally dissatisfied with the humble ways at the Wren's Nest.

Accompanying Lady Dasent, we found ourselves in the midst of quite a large party of young people, some playing tennis, but the greater number merely looking on. Amy was swept from my side immediately; but my anxious eyes followed her, and with pleasure I observed the cordiality with which the Misses Dasent welcomed her.

By-and-by I saw her standing under a lime-tree at some little distance from where I was seated. She was dressed in white; and as she stood in the half-shade, half-sunshine, there was a look of ethereal beauty about her.

'How very pretty your niece is, Miss Courtenay,' Lady Dasent observed.

'Yes; I think she is rather pretty,' I replied.

Some one else thought so too. Just as Lady Dasent spoke, I saw a gentleman introduced to Amy; and while we remained, he determinedly maintained a close proximity to her side. He was young, good-looking, and evidently bent upon making himself very agreeable to my niece.

Hitherto, Amy had lived a life of complete retirement. I had guarded her with a jealous care from all contact with any outward influences that might prejudice the future of my darling. She had been consigned to my care by her mother on her deathbed, when an infant of a few months old; and I had accepted the charge, vowing to be faithful to the utmost of my ability.

I had loved her mother; but I had adored her father—my youngest brother—who had gone out to India with the fairest prospects, and come home, after being there only for a few years, to die. Out of a large family, I was the only one left who could possibly have undertaken the absolute charge of Amy.

And here was I, with my youth far behind me, an unloved old maid, until the child came to me, and in the clasp of her little chubby arms I seemed to grow young again myself. My sorrows became dim in the distance as my charge grew; every day and hour adding to my devotion to her, and, thank God! to her love and affection for me. We were not rich, but we had enough; and I was enabled to have a governess for Amy, so that not even for part of her education had she to leave me. Sometimes, I wished she had some companions of her own age; but when I mentioned it, she always rejected the idea of such a necessity. She was perfectly happy. What more did I want? Nothing, except to insure her continuing to be happy all the days of her life.

Lady Dasent's desire to cultivate our acquaintance presented at least one advantage for Amy; the Misses Dasent were about her own age, and, judging by outward appearances, nice lady-like girls, who seemed anxious to be friendly with her. Still, I shrank from giving encouragement to the intimacy between them; for though Amy's birth was that of a lady, still the Misses Dasent were undeniably above her in rank; and—perhaps from an old-fashioned idea on my part of possible patronage—I rather threw obstacles in the way of any sudden friendship between them.

But I am anticipating, and must revert to the introduction I had witnessed in the distance between Amy and Mr Alfred Mauleverer, which was the name of the individual I before alluded to. I did not make his acquaintance that afternoon; that was an honour reserved for the following day, when he, accompanied by two of the Misses Dasent, came over to the Wren's Nest to invite Amy and myself to a small afternoon party.

It was the beginning of many visits both on their part and our own; in fact, hardly a day passed without our seeing at least Mr Mauleverer, who invariably found some pretext for coming over to us, if we were not to be at Enfield. And then came the ball at Enfield—Amy's first, destined to be a most eventful one, and to which she went arrayed in simple white.

I was not altogether comfortable on the score of her growing intimacy with Mr Mauleverer. Perhaps he was trifling with her; perhaps he was not in every way desirable himself. A thousand disturbing possibilities kept shooting through my old heart, as I sat watching my darling at her first ball, looking radiantly pretty, while Mr Mauleverer redoubled his devotion, and immolated himself so thoroughly at her shrine as to insist on taking me into supper—a piece of civility which I duly appreciated.

Never before had I seen the Dasents' celebrated gold plate, which was on this occasion fully displayed. It was magnificent. Such tankards and salvers of solid gold, to say nothing of plates, spoons, and forks, all apparently of the precious metal. Our conversation naturally turned upon this display; and just as we were admiring it, Florence Dasent happened to join us.

'Miss Courtenay has been admiring the plate,' remarked Mr Mauleverer.

'Yes; isn't it beautiful?' she replied. 'But really, I think pretty china would be almost nicer. I believe papa would prefer it; but we can't get rid of our plate, simply because it is entailed; so are mamma's diamonds.'

Lady Dasent was wearing her diamonds that evening. From my quiet corner in the ballroom, I had specially noticed the necklace, which was rather a tight circle round her throat, set in squares of a formal but of course magnificent description.

A few trifling remarks followed; and then Mr Mauleverer conducted me back to my seat, in the vicinity of which we found Amy, to whom Mr Mauleverer was engaged for the next dance.

I must say they looked a charming couple as they moved away. I suppose my eyes were expressive of my thoughts, for Lady Dasent's voice close beside me seemed to echo them.

'They make a good pair, don't they?' she said. 'Ah, Miss Courtenay,' she continued, 'I am afraid you must not expect to keep your niece always; some one is sure to carry her off soon.'

'I am in no hurry for that time to come,' I replied.—'But, Lady Dasent, do you mind telling me one thing: who is Mr Mauleverer?'

'Who is Mr Mauleverer?' repeated Lady Dasent, with a shade of sarcasm in her voice. 'Well, my dear Miss Courtenay, I believe he is of very good family, very well off; and I know he is very charming, and moves in the best society. You may be quite sure, had he not been very desirable in every way, he would not have been our guest.'

Some one else just then claimed Lady Dasent's attention, and she moved off, leaving me to digest at my leisure the satisfactory remarks she had made relative to Amy's admirer. Very good family—very well off—very charming, and so forth. I was glad to hear it; and could scarcely avoid a feeling of exultation when, on our return home, Amy told me that he had asked her to be his wife, and she had accepted him.

Tired as I was after my unwonted dissipation, sleep seemed to have forsaken me; Amy's engagement was all I could think of until daylight began to struggle into existence; then I suppose I fell asleep, and might have slept for hours, had not my old housemaid Margaret burst into my room without any ceremony, and awakened me with the startling tidings that Enfield had been on fire; and that the gold plate, also nearly all Lady Dasent's diamonds, had been stolen!

It seemed altogether too dreadful to be true; but very shortly afterwards, Mr Mauleverer himself appeared, and fully confirmed the tidings. He had distinguished himself greatly by his bravery in endeavouring to extinguish the flames, and in doing so had burned his right hand rather severely.

'I thought you might hear an exaggerated account of it, so I came over at once,' he observed, with a glance towards Amy.

'Who discovered it?' I asked. 'What can have originated the fire? and above all, who can have taken the plate?'

'And the diamonds?' added Amy.

'That remains to be seen,' replied Mr Mauleverer. 'On my way here, I telegraphed to Scotland Yard, and no doubt a sharp detective will unravel the mystery.'

Partly in order to make it more convenient for guests at a distance, partly because Lord Dasent himself objected to late hours, the ball had begun at the unfashionably early hour of nine o'clock; by half-past two it was over; and by three o'clock comparative silence had reigned over Enfield. The butler had judged it safe—never dreaming of danger—to lock up the supper-room, the shutters of all the windows being strongly barred as well. With an easy mind, and the key in his coat-pocket, that functionary retired to bed, while the rest of the servants gladly followed his example.

Neither bolts nor bars, however, defended the diamonds. Lady Dasent replaced them with her own hands in their cases, which, without any anxiety whatever, she laid upon her toilet-table. To-morrow, they would, as usual, be deposited in the safe, where they were ordinarily kept. She

had dismissed her maid directly she came to her room; one of her daughters unclasped the circlet from her throat; and shortly afterwards—as it came out in evidence—Miss Dasent left her mother's room, crossed the corridor, and was just about to enter her own room, when, in the darkness, some one brushed past her. The circumstance did not alarm her; it was no doubt one of the servants; so she thought no more of it.

Lady Dasent's dressing-room adjoined her bedroom; and her account of the affair was that, a few minutes after she had got into bed, she distinctly heard the handle of her dressing-room door turn; and she fancied she heard a very quiet step in the dressing-room, which in a sleepy way she fancied was her maid.

Lord Dasent heard nothing—had nothing to tell; he wished he had. If any one had brushed past him in the corridor, or he had heard steps in the dressing-room, there would have been neither robbery nor fire. As it was, the stealthy footsteps must have approached the dressing-table, and with a deliberation almost incredible, some one must have opened the cases and abstracted the contents. The circlet, the bracelets, and a pair of magnificent earrings—all were gone. The gold plate had also been cleverly carried off; only a few minor articles having been spared.

At first, all the energies of the household were directed towards subduing the fire. It evidently had its origin near the supper-room, which chanced to be directly below Lady Dasent's rooms. At all events, it was owing to her being awakened by a strong smell of fire, that the alarm was given in time to save not only the house but some of the inmates, who might otherwise have perished in the flames. And from this fate it appeared Mr. Mauleverer had a narrow escape. He had behaved 'splendidly,' so the Dasents said; and as my nephew-elect, I was proud to hear it.

PAVEMENT PORTRAITS.

VIOLET CHARMION.

I stood one hot June day, years ago, in the shade of the east end of the church of St Paul, Covent Garden, talking with an old schoolfellow whom I met accidentally at that spot—a dear friend, who now, alas, lies at the bottom of the Red Sea—and the news which we were exchanging with one another was sufficiently engrossing, and the pleasure of meeting after a long interval of separation sufficiently absorbing, to blot out for a time from our notice the crowds of carriages and pedestrians which were passing and repassing before us in this busy corner of London, at this busy time of the year. We talked long and cheerfully. The world was not grown gray to us; it was still young, and arrayed in that glorious garment of youth—Hope. Stories of mutual friends of our recent boyhood were told and listened to; and the long hand of that honest old church-clock had made more than a complete circuit of its face ere our talk flagged. Indeed, it was the striking of the hour of five which roused us from our recollections of other days and early pleasures, and caused us to pause for a moment in our talk,

to consider the time and what each of us had actually to be doing.

During this pause, we turned and faced the narrow entry, on the other side of the road, which leads to that avenue of Flora and Pomona where gifts of both those goddesses can be had all the year round—for a consideration; and we then became fully aware of the bustle and business in front of us. A block occurred in the road, and for a moment there was a lull, as the traffic was stopped through the entanglement of two or three carriages, and in that moment she appeared!

Clad all in white.—How is she to be described? My pen seems such a barbarous, rough instrument wherewith to attempt to produce a likeness of this lovely vision!—Clad all in white. A straw hat, adorned by a magnificent white feather, shaded the fairest face I had ever seen. A white Cashmere dress, neatly fitting, and gracefully gathered up into loops as regards the skirt, concealed and displayed a form of singular gracefulness. White gloves encased the most exquisite little hands that ever chose 'sixes' at Piver's or Houbigant's; and a ruffle of white lace encircled a noble throat. There she stood, Purity itself! In her hands she held a wealth of roses, and here was the colour in the picture. Roses not made up into formal, if beautiful, bouquets, wired and arranged for opera or ball; but evidently chosen by the fair bearer of them blossom by blossom, just as they had been cut from their bushes or trees, with a wonderful appreciation for their form and hue. A wealth of rippling golden hair, looped up behind, but apparently impatient of restraint—for one vagrant tress had escaped, and lay languid on the right shoulder, looking for all the world as if waiting for some zephyr to come and play with it. Her complexion was pale; but a flush which spread itself over her cheeks as she watched the disentanglement of the carriages, was a concentrated sunrise in itself.

My friend and I with one accord exclaimed: 'What a lovely girl!' and then we became silent. The lady, it turned out, was waiting for her carriage; and while this was being fetched, quite a semicircle of admirers gathered round her at a respectful distance; for there was that in her face and whole appearance which commanded respect as well as admiration. An old dame, of some seventy years or more, rugged as a gnarled oak, and ruddy as a Ribstone pippin—one of that race of female carriers apparently indigenous to Covent Garden Market—put down her basket, folded her arms, and indulged in a good stare, enjoying the sight, to judge by the look of pleasure in her twinkling old eyes, as a thing which did her heart good. The young women who mind the stalls at this part of the market stopped making up their nosegays, and apparently nodded to each other any amount of 'Oh! I says!' and 'That's something likes!' The work of the market was in danger of being stopped by the lady.

But the carriage came—an open carriage, with an elderly lady in it, half asleep; and the steps being let down, the white figure mounted into the vehicle and seated itself. While the old lady was giving some direction to the footman, I saw the young lady bow, blush, and smile; and

when I looked to see the cause of this, I caught sight of a tall handsome young fellow—evidently a soldier by his bearing—raising his hat and smiling back happily to the beautiful occupant of the carriage, which in that instant disappeared.

All this was, as I have said, years ago.

A long time afterwards—perhaps four years—I was in Belgrave Square one night early in the season, and at one of the houses there a grand party was being given. It was very late, and the guests had already begun to depart. A crowd was on the pavement, the members of which were trying with harmless curiosity to catch a glimpse, through the serried ranks of footmen, of the gaily dressed ladies as they passed from the house to their carriages. I stood for a moment to look too; and as I stopped, the door of the house was flung open, and a voice shouted from the top of the steps: 'Lady Charmion's carriage!'

'Lady Charmion's carriage!' was the cry taken up by a watchman on the pavement, by some of the footmen, and a few of the coachmen, until from out the distance came an answering shout, and Lady Charmion's carriage in about a minute drove up. The door of the house once more opened, and lo! I saw the vision of Covent Garden descend the steps. Lovely as ever, there was no doubt it was she! Here, indeed, was an unexpected treat for me. I pressed forward, and got to the front rank of the footmen, in spite of their futile endeavours to keep me back; and assurance was made doubly sure when I recognised the young military man who was escorting the lady to the carriage. And the dear elderly lady was there too, with careful step following her daughter, leaning on the arm of a good-looking old gentleman, evidently her husband.

I almost felt the breath of the girl in white. I heard her voice, for she said to her gallant companion as she went by me: 'Very well; the Botanical Gardens on Wednesday next.—What a delightful party! Good-night.' And for a second time the lady passed out of my sight.

Soon after this, I read in one of the 'Society' papers that a marriage had been arranged between Captain — of the —th Regiment and Miss Violet Charmion, only daughter of Sir Philip Charmion, Bart., and I was quite interested with the announcement, feeling almost that I actually knew the parties. That was in the early summer. A little later on in the year, Sir Philip died suddenly, and the marriage of his daughter was consequently postponed. Misfortunes never come singly, and almost directly after the death of her father, Miss Charmion was separated from her betrothed, whose regiment was ordered to Afghanistan. All this I learned from the papers. And I learned, too, in the autumn of the same year, of a great battle between the British and the Afghan forces; and I scanned the list of the killed, and there found the name of him who was to have been the happy husband of Violet Charmion.

On one of the most biting days of the disastrous winter of 1880, I was fighting my way up Drury Lane with rain and snow and wind against me. The slush on the pavement was inches deep, and walking was by no means easy. It was a day when no one would be out of doors

unless he was obliged to be; for, besides rain, snow, and slush, there was the additional discomfort of intense cold. The people who were in the streets hurried along, as though anxious to perform their errands so as to get under shelter again as soon as possible; and what with this anxiety, and the difficulty of retaining their equilibrium on the slippery pavements under the rude attacks of wind, rain, and snow, collisions between pedestrians were frequently occurring. I myself, buffeted by the wind, advancing with difficulty under the cover of my umbrella, nearly ran into one or two damp and shuddering fellow-creatures. At last, when half way up the Lane, my umbrella blew inside out, and I found myself swirled round by a terrific gust of wind, nearly knocking down, in my rudderless condition, a lady in the garb of the St John's Sisterhood, of nurses who was walking close behind me. I recovered myself as quickly as I could, and apologised for my unintentionally rough behaviour; and as I spoke, my breath almost went from me and my utterance ceased with astonishment; for under that gloomy black straw bonnet, above that sombre, wet, blown-about gown and cloak, I recognised the face of the vision of Covent Garden, the happy girl of Belgrave Square! The face was the same; but the bright colour of youth and happiness had fled from it; and in those blue eyes there was an expression of settled sorrow, beautiful but painful in the extreme. And yet she was but one of the many who have had to mourn, and who will have to mourn—so long as war's deadly blast is blown—the loss of husband, brother, or—lover.

SOMETHING ON BOTH SIDES.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN HELMSLEY, A MARRIED MAN, AND NORTH, A BACHELOR.

Scene.—A quiet street in a certain suburb of London, and afterwards 'the Park.'

Helmsley. Why, North! how are you, old fellow? Who would have thought of meeting you here?

North. Or you?

Helm. Oh, I—I'm house-hunting, you see, and dismal work it is too. But necessity compels. Not sufficient room in the old place now, and I'm trying to find a more roomy residence with a not utterly unreasonable rent. I daresay you remember our settling in that pretty little cottage—eh, North?

North. I have a most vivid recollection of the first visit I paid you after your marriage, and can conjure up a vision at this moment of Mrs Helmsley in long curls and a gray gown. Also, I recollect the air of intense satisfaction pervading your voice and features.—Ah, ten years ago!

Helm. True; and the long curls, like the 'gray gown,' are of the past. But I hope the 'satisfied air' has not departed?

North. Well, no. You look rather as if the world went well with you, old fellow. I daresay we're both happy enough in our particular lines. Yours wouldn't suit me. But we're on much the same errand; I am trying to find lodgings. I can't stand that landlady of mine any longer, so I intend to quit.

Helm. What's the delinquency now?

North. Oh, the old story!—waste and extravagance; half-crowns charged where it ought to be sixpences; extraordinary evanishment of cold meat; surreptitious departure of pickles and preserves; increase of evaporation amongst my tea and sugar; things lost in the wash—'Very sorry, sir, but the washerwoman is so careless'—a remarkable and ubiquitous cat, that makes off with everything, from a pair of fowls to half a bottle of brandy, and which apparently smokes cigars. In fact, there is about every inconvenience a poor mortal can attempt to put up with. Even my patience is outrun at last.

Helm. (laughing). Well, that's a heavy list, old fellow, and I might remind you I've heard much the same from you before. It's rather curious about your landladies, North, that they are always perfection at first—attentive, assiduous, obliging, &c.; then there always ensues a perceptible declension in the careful attentions, until things arrive at what I used to call the 'turn-up' pass. Do you remember that literary landlady of mine, who used to overhaul my bookcase in my absence, and leave visible traces in the shape of dirty finger-marks on my most treasured volumes?

North. Even that I think was scarcely so bad as my last. She nearly worried me to death with her con-founded attentions. I suppose she meant well; but fancy, Helmsley, stopping a fellow, and keeping him talking for ten minutes on the stairs, or wanting to help him on with his great-coat, and see him out at the door! She used to invade my domains under the slightest pretext, and once—once only—made a futile attempt to put my slippers on for me. It was too much; and if that lonely widow was aiming at my hand and heart, she not only missed her mark, but lost her lodger. But we won't malign the whole race, Helmsley; there are good landladies.

Helm. Undoubtedly. The one I left when I married, was a very favourable specimen. Always clean, tidy, civil, very attentive and obliging, good cook—a grand point that, North—and as honest as the day. But a great many can't be depended on; and, as I said before, the most arduous and painstaking often show a sad falling-off when time and temper try. Well, fortunately, I am well out of that sort of thing, and have been for ten years.

North. What! and you a married man, with, let me see, four children! My dear boy, you must be joking. The miseries of single life wax dim and insignificant when confronted with those that weigh upon the married state.

Helm. Pray, may I inquire if you speak from experience?

North. Observation—inference.

Helm. Not worth a straw. Now, I married at thirty, and had then lived in lodgings for ten or twelve years. I have been married ten years and a few months, and am a living negative to the question you asked me on my wedding morning—I've a good memory, North—as to whether my last state would not be worse than my first. Look at me! Am I half-starved looking, bald-headed, careworn, wretched? I've one or two gray hairs, certainly; but so have you, who are two years or so my junior. I firmly believe that my marriage was the luckiest business I ever took in hand.—Now, we have unintentionally drifted

into an argument and into the Park. Shall we take a stroll round, and talk this matter over?

North. Certainly; but premising that you must not expect a convert.

Helm. Oh! I am not unreasonable. We will both argue with the energy of conviction. I will bring the results of experience to bear; you are at liberty to crush me under the weight of observation and inference.—Now, forward to the attack! State your case, while I gather materials for mine.

North. I am convinced that a man who marries—early or late—does a very foolish thing. A single man can do as he pleases—smoke anywhere, drink à discretion, go to the theatre half the nights in the week if he likes, have fellows to see him, go to see them, take splendid walking tours, lie in bed on Sunday; in fact, can enjoy perfect freedom, with no woman tied to his heels; in short, no encumbrances. Now, the married man is often henpecked within an inch of his patience; or if he has too much spirit for that, rendered desperately uncomfortable. If he dare go out without Madame, he must expect cold looks or tearful resignation when he returns. If he venture to invite a bachelor friend or two to spend an evening, sighs follow, and half-expressed wishes that *her* society might be considered enough. If the unfortunate man is tired, and would like a rest on Sunday, instead of being posted up in a stifling church to hear a dull sermon—more sighs, and half-audibly expressed wishes that dear Jack cared a little more for 'such things.' I can quite imagine the sort of thing, and it is not for me. Landladies worry me, but a wife would kill me.

Helm. My good friend, your vivid imagination is only surpassed by your powers of description. Now, I have been both bachelor and Benedict, so can speak from a double experience, and I aver without hesitation that I never really knew what comfort and happiness were till I married. Of course, if your aspirations after happiness rise no higher than the pipe, the glass, the theatre, and the like, all I can say must fall to the ground. But I know it is not so with you, who are a reader, a thinker, and a fervent lover of Nature. The discrepancy between those points of your character and that part of your nature which appears to take pleasure in what is scarcely worthy of it or you, has often made me wonder if you, like myself, might not be much happier in the quiet domestic circle, even with the responsibilities of a family.

North. A wife causes such frightful expense.

Helm. Mine never did; and I know of many more very well-ordered households. I am perfectly comfortable, to argue selfishly; and certainly not henpecked. I should say few men are; and if they are, it must be their own fault, for not quietly asserting themselves, and showing calmly and reasonably that such is not the right course to take with them. Now, look here. I reach home about five; have a comfortable tea, slippers all ready, bright fire, children happy at play in the nursery. Well, I spend the evening as I like—read, write, listen to Fanny's music; go out perhaps with her, or perhaps not; entertain a friend or two sometimes—and you ought to know, North, how my wife receives my bachelor friends.

North. I fervently assent. Mrs Helmsley at least is a partial contradiction to my assertions. But you can't crush my theories so easily.

Helm. I do not want to crush; I wish to convince. I do not think I am of a weak nature, or easily swayed; but I believe that I am much the better for the kindly influence of a gentle woman. I never imagined, in the days when I was a scoffer and sceptic regarding married happiness, how much pleasure could be found in the companionship of an intelligent, well-informed woman. I know now, and I wish you did.

North. My dear fellow, we are getting far too serious. I do not wish or intend to marry—

Helm. Ha! I have just hit on an idea you ought to appreciate, *North*. I have not forgotten your old taste for studying statistics, which I always considered dreadfully dry work. I happened, however, last week to be looking at a statistical table neatly introduced into an article on Population, and was struck by the fact of the immense number of unmarried women of all ages there are in this country. Looking at the number as a whole, it is positively appalling. Now, is it not the duty, the unselfish, disinterested duty of every man to save one woman from being an old maid? Of course, there are some women very well suited to fight the battle of life for themselves, and who are very well content to do so; but there are others who cannot stand alone; while, with some one to cling to and look up to, they may gain a certain strength and confidence, and feel much happier and safer than when drifting alone on the sea of the world, knocking up against obstructions, and buffeted by the stronger craft.—Don't laugh, *North*! I'm not poetical, but I do feel sympathetic. Why don't you and others like you take a weaker vessel in tow?

North. My dear fellow, the young women of the present day are not such as to induce a man of sense to link his existence with any one of them. No soul beyond dress and personal appearance; no ideas beyond driving, promenading, dancing, and flirting; no ambition beyond making 'a good catch.' A fig for the sex! with their flowers and feathers, smiles and simpers, airs and graces! They do very well to dance with or flirt with—I can amuse myself that way; but for a closer connection—not for me!

Helm. I must admit that there are women who answer to the description you have given. But are you compelled to choose a wife from among them? Are there not many quiet sensible girls, pretty, and clever to boot—well brought up, well trained in household affairs and domestic economy, yet with souls sufficiently above the kitchen, and minds well informed enough to make them fit companions for any reasonable man? I know of many such—many who could contribute to any man's happiness, but who remain unmarried simply because men will judge of a class from an individual, and because they see one giddy extravagant girl, studiously avoid any close observation of or comminglement with the sex, and so never come across one of the reasonable, home-loving, intelligent sort. And as to the so-called 'fast' style of girl—my hatred of the word is only second to my dislike of the thing—I think it is in a great degree owing to men that they are what they

are. If they see that men regard them as mere dolls, made to serve for an hour's amusement, or to act as mere chatting, dancing, trifling machines, what wonder is it that they behave as such? I think we do women injustice, *North*. There are clear heads among them; there are clever brains; there are noble characters—good, true hearts. I have known many women worthy of the friendship or the love of any man. If they be not all they might and should, we may at least treat them as reasonable and sentient beings, our equals in most things, our superiors, heaven knows, in many; without any nonsense about angels or anything of that sort. Perhaps, seeing themselves so considered, they might try to work up to the standard of some of their nobler sisters—women whom we must all respect.

North. You would not expect me to wed one of the strong-minded sisterhood, surely—blue spectacles, stiff curls, sharp tongues, and all the rest of it; or a gushing young miss in her teens?

Helm. My friend, I fear you are losing not only your ground but your patience. No; at your age you would have little sympathy with a girl of eighteen or thereabouts, unless she were an uncommonly gifted one; and your other idea is a purely fancy sketch. I would say: Marry a woman some five years your junior, one who has made her own home happy, and can make yours so; one who, having been a good daughter and sister, will be a good wife. I do not know that I should ever have fallen in love with Fanny, had I only known her as the young lady with long curls, who played so prettily and sang so sweetly. But when I was admitted into the home circle, and saw how her bright kindly influence cheered her careworn father, helped her invalid mother, and guided those wilful young brothers of hers, I began to feel as if something of the sort might be good for myself. My principal enemy had been self-love, backed up with various baseless doubts and fears. Single life is a capital thing for feeding and fostering selfishness.—But I think we are wandering from the main question, and this is too much of an oration.—Did you speak, *North*? I beg pardon.

[*North* is, however, all but inaudible, the only distinct words being 'dozen,' 'country,' 'population,' 'overcrowded.']

Helm. Oh, if you bring Malthus & Co. to support your theories, I might as well call the Scriptures to the assistance of mine; and as we should be each doing a very superfluous thing, I think we will not, which you must acknowledge a deed of grace on my part, as the arguments I should bring forward would have the advantage not only of a higher authority but a greater antiquity. And talking of age, what sort of creature is the really old bachelor? I suspect a good many regret their state of single-blessedness, when they find themselves left behind, out of the race, past finding pleasure in the ways they were used to; and wish they had a home and ties of their own, some one whose care and companionship they could really claim. Imagine yourself, *North*, five-and-twenty or thirty years hence! Now, what say you?

North. Don't creak! Why look into the future? I am what I am, and feel happy enough, as a

rule. Every dog has its day; may not I have mine? And there is something you have forgotten, Helmsley, in all your inveighing against selfishness. Cannot an unmarried man do far more good, having more time and money at his disposal, than a married ditto? Cannot he be far more of a benefactor to his kind—do more for the world at large?

Helm. He can; but does he? I will say nothing; you shall ask yourself, and your own good sense will answer.

North. I freely admit I am a selfish wretch; but there are some of the sort I mentioned.

Helm. Yes; one or two; bestowed on us to show us what we might and should be. Not that all our best men and greatest benefactors have been single men, North. A statistical table might be useful in this case, to convince unbelievers such as you. I do not think my public life has suffered because my private life has been a happy one; and I think I shall benefit mankind about as much as I can, by training my children to bear their part well in the world's work, letting them learn the great lesson of helping to bear the burdens of others, as well as blithely carrying their own. And who knows? They may be living illustrations of my theory, that members of a family where good influences have held sway, will unconsciously carry those influences with them wherever they go in the world.—Forgive me, old fellow, if I seem to be sermonising, but we must sometimes look on the serious side of things. Don't you indorse my opinion?

North. Well, I do; and I thank you, old friend, for the sensible and reasonable way in which you have put things. You have at least given me food for thought.

Helm. Ah! very good.—But here we are, out of the Park, and nearly at my house. Come in and have a cup of tea, and we'll have some music, and perhaps a pipe afterwards.

THE LIGHT-GLINT ON LOCH LOMOND.

THE beautiful Queen of Scottish Lakes has, we are told, 'waves without wind, fish without fins, and a floating island;'* but it has also other mysterious secrets which still remain hidden from us. Among these are the many drifts and under-currents, the cold and warm eddies, the deep holes and crevices, which exist in the lake, and are only partly known. Often when the summer season is at its height, we hear of some catastrophe involving loss of life by the sudden upsetting of a frail boat on Loch Lomond; and afterwards, that the most strenuous efforts to recover the bodies of the victims have proved fruitless. The dead sleep their sleep far down in the dark depths of the waters of the Queen of Lakes, and jealously she holds the victims of the treacherous blasts that sweep over her bosom. The terrible gusts which rush down the mountain valleys come without the slightest warning, so that

* Waves without wind—the unsubsided result of sudden squalls; fish without fins—namely, adders, which occasionally swim from island to island; a floating island—an agglomeration of weeds, roots, &c., that once existed on the Loch.—ED.

even the most experienced boatman at times becomes a prey to the death-grip of the dark waters.

Many must remember Dougal—or 'Tougal,' as he called himself—the old fisherman at Luss, with his wrinkled face, bronzed by the sun of at least seventy summers. A rare old specimen of a true Highlander was Dougal. A family of soldiers, and belonging to the Forty-second Highlanders (the Black Watch), his father was one of eight brothers who fought at the disastrous battle of Fontenoy. Six of them died a soldier's death on that fatal day; a seventh was seriously wounded, yet survived to return home; and the remaining brother, Dougal's own father, also bore such scars upon him as showed that he too had been in the thick of storming the French intrenchments. Dougal himself would have been a tough antagonist for any foe to meet, for fear was a thing unknown to him. Now, he sleeps his long sleep in the little churchyard at Luss, where the ivy and flowers grow luxuriantly over the green graves, and high up the summer wind sighs through the tall trees that shade his last resting-place.

One reminiscence of Dougal always clings to me, and I never visit Loch Lomond without recalling it. Dougal was a keen fisher, and no man knew the waters of Loch Lomond better. There was not a feeding-ground or an eddy which Dougal did not know, as well as the salmon or trout which frequented it; but he had a strong dislike to see his favourite waters whipped by an inexperienced hand; and although he accompanied many fishing-parties, he jealously reserved his pet spots for those who knew the difference between the fall of a fly upon the water and the splash of a stone. For the ordinary run of visitors he reserved other waters, where his fish ran no fear of being disturbed, and where the inexperienced could lash the waters to their hearts' content.

Dougal was not of a very communicative nature; but occasionally, to those whom he knew well, he would open up; and often a deep earnestness would mark the account of some of his adventures. He was keenly susceptible to the beauty and glory of the surrounding scenery, and a hushed silence would steal over him when the lights of heaven rested on the mountain and valley, and the lake mirrored them on its calm surface. It was on one of those exquisite evenings, such as one seldom sees elsewhere, when the Queen of the Lakes had decked herself in all her beauty, that Dougal and I quietly turned the boat towards Luss, after a pretty successful day's fishing. The mountains were bathed in the softest light of the setting sun; the surface of the lake was like a mirror, on which the wooded islands looked like floating fairy homes. Far away up the Loch, range after range of mountains faded into the most delicate purple, until in the extreme distance they passed as it were into air. Involuntarily, Dougal stopped rowing and rested upon his oars, as the great shadows fell deeper and deeper upon the water. Some time elapsed before the old fellow resumed rowing, and indeed twilight had set in.

'If you wadna mind, sir,' he said, 'I would like to pull round by Inch Murrin before we go home.'

'All right, Dougal,' I replied. 'It would be a pity to hurry home on such a night as this.'

'Ye're right there, sir,' said Dougal, lapsing into silence.

I was so much wrapped in my own thoughts, that it did not occur to me at the time as something unusual for Dougal of his own accord to pull so far out of his way as Inch Murrin. It was not until we were off the island itself that I noticed that the poor man was very much affected and that he wiped his eyes with his shirt-sleeve.

'Hullo, Dougal!' I said; 'what ails you, man? Are you ill?'

'Na, na, sir,' he said. 'I'm well enough. But ye maun bear wi' me, sir. I'm kind o' minded to-day o' my poor laddie that was drowned here langsyne.'

'Indeed, Dougal! I never knew that you had lost a son in Loch Lomond.'

'Deed, sir, and I did; and it is twenty year this very night.'

'How was it, Dougal?' I asked.

'How it happened,' he answered, 'naeboddy kens; but it was God's ain doing that I found my laddie's body. It was just here at this very spot where we now are; and deed, sir, I would never have had the heart to boat all these years on the Loch, had I kenned that my bairn was lyin' dead at the bottom of it. Well, sir, it was a braw simmer's day when my laddie left Luss in the wee boat to take owre some fishin'-gear to a gentleman near the Balloch end o' the Loch; and frae that trip he never came back. I mind there was a bit o' a squall in the evenin'; but neither me nor onybody else fashed about that. But the laddie didna come home that night; and when next day our boat was found capsized, and driftin' awa' up the Loch, I kent that a mischance had befallen our bairn. Me and my neighbours went off at once to try and hear tidings o' him. We put in at a' the islands, and awa' along baith shores o' the Loch; but couldna hear tell o' him. We then got out the irons, and grappled and searched every corner between Luss and Balloch; but not a trace could we find. We tried until the neighbours said it was no use searching any more, and we must just bide and see whether the body wouldna come ashore o' itself.'

'Sair, sair did my auld woman greet, and little heed could I gie to my wark; but I aye wandered aboot and up and down the shore seek, seeking. Well, it was just the fourth day after we found the boat, that I pulled awa' out among the islands a' by mysel'. It was a Saturday night; there was not much wind, but it was a dark night, and I thought I would go the length of Inch Murrin. Just as I reached the spot we're at now, sir, there came the queerest glint o' light upon the water I ever saw. It came straight down from the lift, and lighted up one solitary spot on the Loch for two or three seconds; and I knew it was God's hand pointing out to me where my laddie lay. I canna say what it was—it wasna fear—but my heart seemed amaisht to loup to my mouth. I had naething in the boat to grapple wi'; but I rowed home as hard as I could, after I had gotten the exact bearing o' where the light had been. I told naeboddy, not even his mother, o' what I had seen, for I was dazed wi' my ain thoughts; but next mornin'—though it was the Lord's day—I was up wi' the first o' the daylight, and awa' out to this

very spot. I put down the grapplin'-irons; and, O sir! the very first pull I struck something heavy. I kind o' prayed to the Lord to gie me strength; and I took heart, and I pulled up the iron—and there, at the end o' the grapplin', was my puir dead bairn! I can never pass here without thinking on that night, and the light which God sent down upon the water!'

I let no word of mine disturb the poor old man's thoughts, as I took the oars from him, and, leaving him to sit silent in the stern of the boat, rowed slowly into Luss.

AN OLD GARDEN.

SOMEWHERE in the Past so golden,
Whose sweet memories are my own,
Was a garden, large and sunny,
Filled with blossoms, whence the bees
Gathered richest stores of honey,
And the rose-shrubs grew like trees;
With fair petals round them strewn.

Sloping downwards to a river,
Grassy terraces were there;
And great beds of daintiest flowers,
Pansies with their purple glow,
Palest woodbines wreathed in bowers;
And the streamlet ran below,
Singing to these creatures fair
Through the blessed summer hours.

You could wander at your leisure
With a deep and quiet content;
You could lose yourself in sweetness;
Hedges of the May rose grew
With a lavish, full completeness;
And bright lilacs, steeped in dew,
Shook above your head, and bent
To each wind with very pleasure.

Softly in the verdant mazes
Of green walks your footsteps fell;
And the murmur of the river,
Like a song of love and rest,
Seemed to warble on for ever;
Then some bird with russet breast
Startled, flew across the dell,
From its bed among the daisies.

Then in autumn what a treasure
Of all sweetest fruits you found
Hanging from each laden tree,
Ripening on the sunny wall;
And you picked them at your pleasure.
They were free to you and all,
As the sun and wind are free,
Scattered in rich plenty round.

Ah, those days of untold sweetness!
Ah, those hours of Hope and Rest!
Who shall tell their wondrous beauty?
Who shall bring again the Past?
Years grow swifter in their fleetness,
And our spirits murmur sadly
That 'the olden days were best.'

J. H.

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TROPICAL BRITAIN.

It is a common remark, that a former dweller on the earth, were he permitted to revisit scenes once familiar, would find them in many instances changed out of all knowledge. We may with equal justness reverse the remark, and find it applicable to ourselves, were we taken back through the scenes of the historic past, and especially the long ages of the geological periods. Such glimpses of the past are not unattainable. All the principal geological and climatic changes which in succession have passed over the surface of the earth, have been self-registered. Successive landscapes have as it were photographed themselves upon the sensitive plate of the earth's successively renewed surface; their impressions lie buried beneath our feet everywhere, or traced on hill-slopes all around; and where uncovered or detected, though the lines are in many cases blurred and indistinct, to the trained eye of the student they unfold scenes which stand out before the mind with singular distinctness.

How fascinating the interest of endeavouring to recall the long past! Let us, therefore, imagine ourselves transported to the Britain of the Eocene period, and under the guidance of the most recent discoveries and conclusions of geologists and others, picture the scenes which would then meet our view. It is B.C.—we know not how many tens of thousands of years. One thing we are certain of—it is a long distance on this side of that chaotic period, millions of years ago, when, according to Mr G. H. Darwin and Professor Ball of Dublin, the earth, a huge molten mass, gave birth to the moon; and mother and daughter hung perilously near each other till the latter began that retreating movement which she still continues. The Primary and Secondary periods had already done their work in moulding our earth into habitable conditions for higher and higher forms of life. We are at the dawn (*Eocene*) of the Tertiary period, in whose later development man appears upon the scene.

But as we find our way to what is now British soil, and look around, how difficult to believe that we are in Britain's latitudes. For on every hand we see the rich and luxuriant life of the tropics; and the hot air smites us with faintness. From the teeming soil springs a bewildering variety of vegetation, and unfamiliar species appear everywhere. We recognise with astonishment forms of vegetable life which at present we naturally look for only in sunnier climes. When we examine closer, it seems, indeed, as if the plants and flowers of all regions of the earth are gathered around us. To see the nettle-trees, but especially the honeysuckle-trees (*Banksias*) and the leathery-leaved gum-trees (*Eucalypti*), we might fancy ourselves in Australia with its characteristic evergreen vegetation. The weird shapes of huge cacti, again, transport us to the regions of Central America, parched with frequent droughts, while the fig-tree at our side speaks of the shores of the Mediterranean; the palm yonder leads the thoughts to Africa; and that bread-fruit in the distance awakens visions of the beautiful scenery of the islands of the South Seas. Twining round the tree-stems, flinging their tendrils from branch to branch, creeping, twisting, interlacing everywhere, wreathing themselves in myriad graceful festoons, gorgeous with flowers of every hue, and making our forests as impassable as those of South America, are those wonderful climbing-plants, amid which veteran explorers might recognise their most inveterate foes.

And withal, the trees and plants of temperate climes abound also. And just as the British traveller of to-day in tropical latitudes welcomes the sight of them as old friends, linking him with the temperate regions which are his home, so in that far-back Eocene age, amid so much to make us doubt whether we are on British soil, we welcome the sight of the beech, the elm, the chestnut, and the oak. The air is alive with the hum of insect-life characteristic of the tropics. Glancing, flashing, gleaming in the sunlight, many of them rivalling in colour the flowers

over which they hover, these ephemeral creatures are fed by, and in their turn help to feed, the profusion of living forms which the prolific heat engenders.

And if the vegetation around is strange to us, stranger still are the animals and the birds we observe from time to time. Even while we stand entranced with delight at the rich and varied beauty of the forest scene, or the view by the sleeping waters of a lagoon, the ugly form of an alligator is seen floating like a log, with earnest watchfulness intent upon his prey. Yonder, again, a splash is heard, and there glides forth on land or water some fierce monster, of a shape which suggests that the goblins and dragons fabled by primitive races were not drawn wholly from imagination.

Lingering still in the Britain of the past, we must beware of bathing in this noble stream, whose waters, bending round in graceful curve, have here left a clear stretch of sand and gravel, and yonder are swept by the overhanging luxuriance of the forest. Safe, tempting as it looks, the crocodile and its cousin the gavia, with long, flat, ugly muzzle, are not far off. Peeping through the forest branches, rustling the leaves as they steal down to drink, we catch glimpses of bright graceful creatures not unlike the deer and the antelope, and probably the progenitors of these. Curious it seems to catch sight of one of the oldest and least changed of still living species, an opossum peering down upon us from the branches overhead; while we discover with surprise that animals like the kangaroo are native to these shores. We seem to be in half-a-dozen different regions of the earth at once. Places as distant as the Malay Peninsula and the forest recesses of South America, are brought to our door, when we see in these latitudes the tapir, for example, with his long flexible snout and thick hide, feeding greedily on the tender tree-shoots. High overhead, in the serene air, floats the vulture, looking for the dead. Down stream, kingfishers flash to and fro with gleaming plumage; and herons stand watching for their finny prey. Birds shaped like geese, but with what resemble teeth upon their beak, flounder in the water; while in the open glades feed others, huge and wingless, like a now extinct species in New Zealand.

And when, emerging from the forests, we stand on the shores of the shallow Eocene Sea on the south-east, we find it also teeming with the life of tropical as well as temperate climes. Flights of gulls crest its waves, or hover over it, dashing down from time to time to seize an unlucky fish. 'Gigantic sharks, rays, sword-fishes and sturgeons' tumble about in its waters, and find abundant prey; while among them is a peculiar armour-clad fish. Gliding in graceful undulations are sea-snakes twelve feet long; while the number of turtles is countless. The nautilus frequents the seas; the cowry, minute and burdensome coin of India, abounds upon the sand beneath our feet; and other tropical shells, as the cone, volute, olive, and large spindle shells, seem to be indigenous to the shores.

Nor are these the only features of the scene fitted to fill us with surprise. There are many other characteristics of British scenery and geography in that Eocene period which startle us

by their contrast with the present. What a rude shock, for example, to our insular exclusiveness and sense of insular security, to discover that Eocene Britain is not an island! Not only do Ireland and all the islands to the west and north form an integral portion of it, but it is joined on the south-west to Bretagne. From the east of Scotland to Norway extends a great valley covered with forests, and watered by a noble river receiving its tributaries from the ravines of what are now Norwegian fjords and the firths of Moray and Forth. And stranger still, there is a land-connection, broadening as we follow it northward, extending from the north-west of Scotland by way of the Farøe Isles and Iceland, to Greenland and the northern portion of North America.

And while our land forms a portion of two continents, the coast-line of Britain is at the same time far more extensive in these Eocene times than now. The sea tossed and moaned far distant from these cliffs and bays of to-day. Many miles out beneath the Atlantic are the old shores of England and Ireland. Land's End is thus not the land's end, but a lofty inland plateau breaking away probably in terrific precipices on the south and west; and stretching away from the base of these is an undulating plain covered with dense forests, its bounds washed by the remote Atlantic. Northward, where we expect to see the gleaming waters of the Bristol Channel, we behold a wide valley, along which the waters of the Severn flow, till at a point farther west than the now westmost part of Ireland, they join the ocean. Eddystone Rock needs no lighthouse. It is probably a lofty mountain peak. Torquay is far inland. All the delightful bays and pleasant health-resorts of the south-west of our England are many miles from any sea.

We look with deep interest and curiosity to see how much of the present well-known scenery of mountain, plain, and valley can be identified; and under the guidance of Professor Dawkins and others, discover that the general outlines of English, Scotch, and Irish landscapes are much more striking, bolder, more abrupt than now; not having been yet smoothed by the action of the ice of later periods. We gaze with wonder not unmixed with awe on the wild grandeur of the mountain scenery of Wales, Cumberland, and Western Scotland, in the dawn of this period. Many of the mountains of the Hebrides are active volcanoes. Volcanic agency has built them up. Hence we see them as groups of cone and dome like shapes, like those of Auvergne of to-day, 'rising above the forest which spread from these rugged Alpine heights, far away in one mass of green, broken only by the rivers, to Ireland and the remote coast-line of the Western Sea.' But their height fills us with astonishment. See that volcano of Mull, of which but a fragment now remains, grand doubtless, in its way, but insignificant when compared with the ancient magnificence of the mountain. It has been calculated—by Professor Judd—as from ten to fourteen thousand feet high, inclusive of the cone rising above the trees in the distance yonder. These Welsh, Cumbrian, and Scotch mountains are more than twice as high as in degenerate nineteenth-century

times. Such at least are they, according to one geological authority, in the period immediately succeeding the Eocene—namely, the Miocene. Low as even these heights are in comparison with the giants of the Himalaya and the Andes, we cannot, gazing on the Highland hills of to-day, think without wonder and awe of an ancient grandeur which made them worthy rivals of even the Cottian, Pennine, and Bernese Alps, with their historic summits—Monte Viso, Mont Blanc, and the Jungfrau. On those awful heights, the snow never melted. Clouds floated around their dazzling ice-clad summits, and hid from time to time their white, sky-piercing peaks. Dizzy precipices, abyssal ravines, cleft and scarred their sides. Go where one would, the solemn grandeur of these towering mountain masses must ever have dominated the view; while more awe-inspiring still the spectacle when from time to time one or other of them burst forth in volcanic fury, vomiting ashes and fire, and spreading far and near, over the luxuriant vegetation beneath, death and desolation.

Curious in its way it is to think how different would have been every feature of our life of to-day, had those Eocene conditions lasted till now. So completely are those physical circumstances distinct from those of the present, that to all but such as have made a special study of them, they must at first appear unnatural and incredible. Yet the fossil remains of plants, animals, birds, fishes, found in these islands, tell their own tale; and speak of tropical conditions of temperature, and distributions of land and sea very different from those of to-day.

Wonderful as it is to think of that teeming life multiplying itself in myriad forms, and spreading its beauty and its fitness forth beneath the Creator's eye; more wonderful still, and instructive too, it is to think of it all as a vast and steady progress and preparation which is to culminate in the appearance of Man, the 'minister and interpreter of nature,' to whose gradually strengthening gaze these long ages of the past now unfold themselves; and who, from their petrified remains, pictures many a life that had begun, culminated, and perished, ages before his epoch.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLIV.—'AY!' CRIED GARLING IN A QUAVERING VOICE, 'YOU HAVE PUNISHED ME ENOUGH, AMONGST YOU.'

HAVING once decided in her travelled mind that foreign cities were not only unlike London, but exceedingly unlike each other, Mary was steelled against the surprises of costume, architecture, and physiognomy. But that she shared the common frailty, and was not steelled against the amazement of meeting what used to be common in the midst of so much uncommonness, was fairly proved by the fact that suddenly encountering Hiram Search in a shady street in Cadiz, she sat upon a convenient doorstep and fainted. Hiram himself, though much amazed by the encounter, was less affected, and seizing a passing water-carrier, borrowed his little tin vessel, and knelt above his sweetheart and laved her temples

and her lips until she recovered. He had pictured to himself another meeting, and had all ready for delivery an impressive discourse calculated for her moral benefit; but now, when she came round, he was nursing her head upon his breast and murmuring, 'My poor darlin', my poor darlin', and taking not the slightest notice of half-a-dozen ugly but picturesque old women, and one picturesque and astonishingly pretty young one, who suddenly found this little drama acting beneath their noses, and stood attentively to watch it through. Mary was much more sensitive to public observation than her lover. The first thing she did was to arrange her bonnet and lower her veil, the next to resume her seat upon the convenient doorstep and cry comfortably. Hiram addressed the assembled ladies in their own language, and begged them to disperse; but being unable to prevail upon them, he lifted Mary to her feet, tucked her arm under his, and marched off with her.

'Mrs Strange is in Cadiz, I suppose?' asked Hiram.

'Yes,' answered Mary; 'and Mr Strange. They are going home to their house at Brierham.'

Hiram's reception of this simple piece of news astonished Mary; but it meant so much to him that she could not understand. He resolved at once to keep a hawk's eye on his master.

'You have been very angry with me, Hiram,' said Mary, attacking the subject next her heart; 'but you will forgive me, won't you?'

Somehow, Hiram's sternness had dissolved, and he forgave her, without the lecture he had intended to deliver; and she began to bubble over with innocent happiness and gaiety, and to talk of her curiosities of modern travel, all grown remarkable again, now that Hiram was here to listen whilst she spoke of them. He allowed her to run on, and threw in here and there a question to direct her talk, so that, without alarming her by any inkling of his own fears, he drew from her a contradiction of them. Gerard had touched neither at Naples nor Marseilles, and could, therefore, not be here of malice aforethought, since he had no knowledge of his enemy's journey. And just as this dread was finally lifted from Hiram's mind, Mary stopped, and clasping his arm with both hands, made as if to hide herself behind him, whilst with frightened eyes she stared across the street. Following the direction of her glance, he was aware of his master, standing stock-still with folded arms, unconscious of their presence, but tracking with eyes that burned like fire another figure in their rear, which, as they halted, approached them, leaning heavily on a walking-stick, and moving with a dejected head and downward glance. The face of this bent and ancient-looking figure was hidden from Hiram, though visible to Gerard. The latter crossing the sunny pavement, stepped into shadow within two yards of Hiram, so absorbed in his contemplation of the bent figure that he had no eyes for his servant. When the man tottered and quavered quite close, Gerard gripped him by the shoulder, and the pinched old face whose hollow careworn eyes looked up at him was the face of Garling. Hiram fell back a step with an exclamation which drew his master's regard upon him. Garling's glance travelled from one

to another, with an uneasy half-apprehension of their presence. His own daughter; the man who had ruined his plans; and the son of the man he had plotted to ruin. He murmured that they had not often looked so real, and made as if to pass on; but Gerard's grasp detained him.

'So you are here, Mr Garling, are you?' asked Gerard, swaying the quavering old figure gently to and fro in his strong hand. 'Your villainy hasn't led to happiness, either?' That truth was written in his face.

'That's new,' said Garling, turning his head aside, as if to listen. 'They say the same things over and over again. A trick—a mere trick, to trap me into weakness and confession.'

'Mister,' said Hiram, 'he's as mad as a March hare!'

The old man's eyes shifted to the last speaker, with a new look in them, half dreadful, half inquiring. Then they wandered to his daughter's face. 'Why don't you speak?' he asked.

She shrank away from him. 'Hiram,' she said falteringly, 'he frightens me. Take me away.'

'You can't hold malice against a thing like this,' said Hiram, addressing his master.

'Malice?' replied Gerard, dropping the hand that had held Garling. 'No.'

'Ay!' cried Garling in a quavering voice, 'you have punished me enough, amongst you! But you were gentle when the rest were hard. Perhaps you guessed I meant to use you kindly after all. This was to Mary, who shrank back from him appalled. 'Ay, you're afraid of me; but I meant well by you. And I mean well by you still. It isn't much, compared with what it might have been, but it is all honestly come by, and that's a great matter—a great matter. Make a good use of it.'

The three who heard him looked from one to the other, and little Mary, whose nerves had already been greatly shaken, began to cry again.

'Why, now you weep,' he said, 'and I perceive you feel some touch of pity. Ah, that's Shakespeare! I was a great student of Shakespeare when I was a lad. A man of lofty imagination, and versed in all the mysteries of human nature. Caesar haunted Brutus. But no man was ever so crowded round with ghosts as I have been.'

It was evident alike to Gerard and to Hiram that he was not sure of their corporeal unreality, but they could each trace the meaning beneath these scattered words of his.

'You don't take me for a ghost, do you, mister?' said Hiram.

Garling looked startled and perplexed, and made as if to go on again, but turning, caught sight of Mary, and laid his hand on her gently. 'Don't go,' he whispered; 'don't leave me. I shall make it worth your while.'

'Heaven's my witness, mister,' said Hiram earnestly to Gerard, 'that I don't want my little gell to finger a penny of his money, if he's got any; but it ain't the thing to leave him in this condition in a foreign city. He's been a rare bad old lot, and that's a fact; but he ought to be looked after.'

Gerard returning no answer, Hiram laid his hand on Garling's shoulder and addressed him in Spanish. 'Do you speak the language, old man? Can you get on by yourself?'

'Yes, yes,' returned Garling, putting him fretfully aside, and striving once more to get past Hiram to his daughter, who, with terror in every gesture and feature, avoided him.

'Take her away,' said Gerard. 'I will see that he does not follow you. I can get somebody to take charge of him, I daresay.—You needn't be afraid of me, Search,' he said, somewhat bitterly. 'Heaven has taken vengeance here.'

'That's like yourself,' returned Hiram. 'That's the first thing like you sence we sailed out of Thames river!'

'Take her away,' said Gerard again, speaking sternly this time. Hiram obeyed.

The old man struggled to pursue the retreating pair; but Gerard, passing an arm through Garling's, turned round, and led him in the way he had been originally going. He resented this for a moment only, and then, with drooping eyes, submitted.

'Where do you live?' asked Gerard.

Garling raised his stick a little from the ground and pointed forward. He went on slowly but without hesitation; and before they had gone far, he paused, and drawing a key from his pocket, entered at an open doorway, mounted a set of white stone steps, and admitted himself to a large chamber, furnished in the fashion of the country, which always looks sparse to an English eye, but with no sign of poverty or neglect in its appearance.

'Is this your home?' Gerard demanded softly.

Garling laid down his hat and stick and passed a hand across his forehead before answering. When he responded, it was with a tone and manner so different from those he had hitherto employed, that the questioner was startled. 'This is my home, Mr Lumby, and will be for the remainder of my time.' He motioned his visitor to a seat, and himself sank down wearily. 'I cannot resent your intrusion,' he said feebly; 'and since you have found me here, you may tell my late employers that I am a good deal worn, and that I shall not last much longer. I have had many troubles lately, Mr Gerard, and my mind is affected; I feel it unhinged at times. I was proud of my intellect many years ago, and I misused it. I am broken down, as you may know by these confessions; shattered, quite shattered, and an old man.' The light alternately flickered and faded on his face, and his voice seemed to fall and rise with the brightening and the dying of an inward gleam. At one second his face and voice looked and sounded altogether sane, and in the next both had grown senile. The words 'I am broken down' were maundering: 'as you may know by these confessions' followed swiftly, with a re-assertion of his ancient self: 'shattered, quite shattered; an old man, might have been spoken by one hopelessly gone in melancholia.'

'The evil you attempted to do us, failed, or partly failed,' said Gerard. He might have gone on to say more; but Garling broke in with a murmur: 'Failed? Yes, yes. It failed.' Then they both sat silent for a time, until Garling looked up with a bewildered air. 'Help me,' he said; 'I want to think of something. Whom did I meet? Have I met anybody to-day?'

'Your daughter?' asked Gerard.

'Yes,' he said, brightening instantly, but sinking

back again. By-and-by he said, in the old dry reticent way which the listener could remember from his boyhood: 'It is a curious thing for me to ask a favour of any man belonging to your house. Will you do me one?'

'If I can,' said Gerard. 'Yes.'

'There is some remnant of my own money left me, and I wish my daughter to inherit it. I have not command of myself at all times, and my mind is shattered. It is going. What did I want to say?'

'Listen to me,' said Gerard, as he drooped again. 'You wish to make a will in your daughter's favour?'

'Yes, yes.'

'Entirely and without reserve?'—He nodded. 'Yes' again, with brightening eyes.—'And you wish me to have it prepared and bring it to you to sign?'

'Yes,' he said, once more collected; 'and to make immediate provision for the transfer of my last penny to an English bank.' He arose and produced papers, and gave instructions drily and clearly, without even a verbal stumble. 'If you bring a lawyer with you,' he said then, 'see me before you bring him, and let him meet me at my best.'

Gerard promised this also; and Garling again began to mander in his speech; and after a time the young fellow left him, bound by his undertaking, but not sure that the broken swindler would ever again be in a mental condition to make any business transaction valid. He did perhaps the wisest thing he could do, and consulted the British consul, to whom he told the whole story. The consul himself drafted Garling's last testament, and he and Gerard witnessed the document when it was signed. When called upon for his signature, Garling was in the full possession of his powers. The man's tremendous will was equal to the strain he made upon it; but it never answered to another call; and in a week his stubborn wasted heart beat its last, and the ghosts his wicked life had gathered round him haunted him no more.

CURIOUS CASES OF GUNSHOT WOUNDS.

BY A RETIRED ARMY SURGEON.

HAVING read the article on 'Curious Facts relating to Gunshot Wounds,' in No. 931 of your *Journal*, I send you a few facts relating to wounds of the above nature, which came under my own observation while I was surgeon of a regiment.

At the relief of the Residency of Lucknow, during the Indian Mutiny in 1857, the following cases were brought to me. A private of my own regiment who had remarkably prominent eyes and a very flat nose, had both eyes cut open by a bullet which passed across them without injuring the nose. Another private was struck by a bullet on the outer edge of the right orbit. It broke the bone, and grooved the temple deeply. I dressed the wound, and applied a bandage to keep the dressing in its place, and desired the man to sit down while I attended to other cases. There is an old saying which was in use amongst sailors, namely, 'If you wish

to be safe, put your head into a hole that has been made by a cannon-ball, as the chances are that a second shot will not strike the same spot.' The case of this man, however, was a curious contradiction to this saying. About an hour after I had dressed his wound, I missed him; and as I was making inquiries about him, he presented himself, wounded a second time, and strange to say, in the very same spot, the bullet having ripped up the bandage and the dressing, and considerably enlarged the first wound. It appeared that after the first wound had been dressed, feeling that he had the use of his arms and legs, he slipped quietly away while my back was turned, rejoined his company in the fight, and was wounded almost immediately in the very same spot.

A third private was struck by a bullet on the outer edge of the left orbit. The bone was broken, and there was only a small wound, about a quarter of an inch long, on the skin, extending downwards—so small, that I did not think it possible that a bullet could have entered it. The wound healed; and for eight years afterwards the man did his duty. About the end of the eighth year, however, an abscess formed at the spot where he had been wounded; and on opening it, I observed a small dark body appearing just above the edge of the orbit. At first I thought it was a piece of dead bone; but on removing it, found it to be the half of a bullet. It had been lying within the orbital space under the eyeball for eight years. When he was wounded, the bullet must have been split on the edge of the bone, one half flying off, and the other half lodging within the orbit. He lost the sight of the eye from the moment that he was wounded, though there was no apparent injury to the organ; but strange to say, the half-bullet lying under the eyeball never gave him the least inconvenience; and he was as much astonished as I was when I removed and handed it to him.

A fourth private, a huge man, standing six feet four inches, and with an immense chest and frame, was struck by a bullet on the breast-plate, and knocked down, but without being injured, except that 'the wind was knocked out of him,' as he said himself. How such a huge body could have been knocked down by a musket-bullet, was astonishing.

A fifth private was struck on the rim of his feather bonnet. This broke the force of the bullet; but it passed through the frontal bone and lodged in his brain. He was quite sensible, had no pain, and only complained of giddiness. He was sent home as an invalid; and two years afterwards I heard that he was still alive.

Another private advancing at a run, had his mouth open; a bullet entered his mouth, passed between the skin and the muscle which is attached to the angle of the jawbone, and was removed from beneath the skin at the back of the neck. At first, he was not aware of having been

wounded, and was astonished to find himself spitting blood and his jaw gradually becoming stiff.

Another private was slightly wounded three days in succession, and began to think that he had had his full share, and would escape for the future. One day, however, as he was sitting in his tent in camp, into which the enemy occasionally sent shot and shell, a six-pounder round-shot came ricochetting along the ground, burst into the tent where the man was sitting, and struck him on the back, rolling him heels-over-head. He lay gasping for a minute or two, thinking he was done for; but he gradually recovered his breath, found that he could move his legs; then his arms, then that he could sit up; and at last he stood up, and with the assistance of a comrade on each side, walked to the hospital, which was close by, sheltered behind some ruins. He was black and blue for some time, and that was all. He was never wounded again.

An officer of my acquaintance is now living—I saw him only a few months ago, looking remarkably well—who has a bullet lodged in the base of his right lung, and it has been there since 1857, as he was wounded during the Mutiny. He suffers very little inconvenience, except that occasionally he has a fit of coughing, followed by expectoration of blood.

On the field of Inkermann, sixteen months after the battle, I picked up the mummified head of a Russian. The eyelids, nose, lips, and skin of the cheeks, were still discernible, and the skull was covered by the scalp, to which some light yellow hair adhered. There was a hole right through the skull; and I found half a bullet lying between the scalp and the bone, on the top of the head. The bullet must have struck the bone, and been split, one half passing right through the head, and the other lodging under the scalp. I brought the skull home, and gave it to a brother medical officer, who promised to send it to the Museum of the College of Surgeons, Edinburgh.

A native servant of a brother-officer was struck by a bullet on the forehead just above the left frontal sinus. The bullet was wedged into the bone; the skin healed over it, and the man resumed his duty, and lived, feeling no inconvenience, for nearly a year. Suddenly one day he fell down, and after being convulsed for a couple of minutes, died. I had never heard of this case until after the man's death; but the moment it was reported to me, I went to see and examine the wound. I found a round bullet wedged tightly into the bone, two-thirds of it extending beyond the inner plate of the skull, and pressing on the brain, which immediately round the spot of pressure was softened.

On first entering the army—upwards of thirty-seven years ago—I was ordered to join a regiment at the Cape of Good Hope; and within eighteen months after my arrival, a Kaffir war broke out, and was protracted during two years—the war of 1846-7. During the second year of the war, I was with a detachment of my regiment, which was encamped on the north bank of the Great Fish River, close to the sea, for the purpose of protecting government stores which were landed there, that being the nearest point to the scene of hostilities. Upon a certain day, a sergeant

and one of the privates left the camp without leave, taking a horse with them to bring home some green forage. They went without firearms or any other kind of weapon, which was simply folly; but they had been so often on similar expeditions before and seen no enemy, that they concluded there were none in the neighbourhood. On arrival at some oat-fields, they tied the horse to a stump of a tree, cut a supply of forage, and were in the act of making it up into two bundles, to sling over the horse, when three Kaffirs, one armed with a gun, and the others with assegais, who had been lying concealed in the tall oats, sprung upon them. The one with the gun was facing the sergeant, who thought that his only chance was to close at once with his enemy, and accordingly he rushed forward with that object; but just as he was about to grasp the barrel of the gun, the Kaffir fired, the muzzle of the weapon almost touching the sergeant's stomach as he did so. Though he felt that he was wounded, the sergeant grappled with the Kaffir, and after a struggle, wrenched the gun out of his hands, and clubbing it, struck him a blow on the head which killed him. The private in the meantime had fallen pierced by assegais. While the sergeant and the Kaffir were struggling, one of the other two Kaffirs ran to where the horse was tied up, and cut the halter through with his assegai. But the horse thus freed escaped from the Kaffir, and fortunately approached his master, who got upon his back and galloped off towards the camp.

I was standing at the door of my hut, and saw the sergeant gallop in and dismount; and to my surprise, he walked quietly up to me, saluted, and said: 'I am wounded, sir;' and then he turned and walked with me to the hospital, and on entering the hut, fainted. We laid him on a cot and removed his clothes, when I found that he was shot right through the abdomen. The bullet had entered a little to the left of the umbilicus, passed straight through, and made its exit just below the rim of the ala—or large curved bone—of the pelvis, making a clean round hole. The skin round the wound in front was much scorched, showing that the muzzle of the gun must have been very close to the part when fired.

He rallied slowly from his faint; but of course I thought the wound was a mortal one, and that my patient had not many hours to live, so sat beside him during the afternoon and all that night, and attended to him next day, giving him a little nourishment frequently. To my astonishment, he relished his nourishment and fell asleep, and woke up and took more soup and fell asleep again. Meanwhile, no bad symptoms appeared, and as there was no interruption of the visceral functions, I began to be hopeful.

Matters went on in this way for several days, during which the only discomfort—I could not call it suffering—that he felt was that the scorched dead flesh around the wound in front began to separate; and when this came away, there was exposed a large opening nearly two inches square, through which I saw plainly then, and for days thereafter, the bowels lying in their natural position, and apparently uninjured; and yet I could hardly believe this possible. However, the case went on favourably; the large hole

gradually contracted and healed up, and so did the wound behind; and within two months from the day that he was wounded, he was able to move about, and within another month, to make his appearance on parade again.

It was an extraordinary case. The bullet must have passed straight through; for there was nothing to deflect it, and the two wounds were exactly opposite each other. How the bowels escaped injury, was truly wonderful; and I can only explain it by supposing that the bullet—a small round smooth one—passed immediately under the large, and above the small intestine, in fact between the two, and as close as possible to each, almost touching both. This happened thirty-six years ago; and within the last seven years, I heard from an old brother-officer that the man was alive and healthy, though well stricken in years. Wounds in the abdomen are almost always fatal, and this is the only case of recovery within my experience.

One or two cases of very narrow escapes from death by a bullet occur to me. During the Kaffir war which I have already alluded to, I several times accompanied large parties of troops sent out to intercept or pursue bodies of the enemy; or to destroy kraals or capture cattle. We never succeeded in intercepting or overtaking Kaffirs unless they were in strong parties and desired to fight; and as we marched along by day, the Kaffirs, in loose order and in parties of two or three, would hang upon our flanks and rear, showing themselves upon the high ground, but keeping out of range of our muskets.

One night, four of us were sitting cross-legged round a little fire on which we had put our coffee-kettle to boil; and as we thus sat, a report, followed by the ping of a bullet close over our heads, warned us that Kaffirs were prowling about. This was followed by several other shots, which struck the ground quite close to us; but we were tired and cold and hungry, having had no food all day, and we were unwilling to lie down to sleep on the bare ground with empty stomachs. We therefore determined, in spite of danger, to keep the fire burning until the coffee was ready; and to hurry this, one of us stooped down to blow the fire with his mouth, when another shot settled the matter, for a bullet passing between two of us, smashed the kettle, and scattered the embers about the head of the one who was blowing the fire. How close the bullet passed to his head may be imagined, for it touched his hair. There was nothing to be done but to stamp all the embers out, roll ourselves in our cloaks, and light our pipes to keep down the cravings of hunger.

At the relief of the Residency of Lucknow, the colonel of my regiment had two very narrow escapes. As he was cantering from one position to another, the motion of the horse raised him a little out of the saddle every now and then, and just at the moment when he was raised out of the saddle, a bullet passed below him, tearing the leather open along the whole seat of the saddle. Had he been sitting still in the saddle, he would have been horribly wounded. Shortly after, another bullet struck the handle of his revolver, which was in a pouch attached to his sword-belt, and but for the revolver, he would have received a mortal wound.

At the battle of Cawnpore, on the 6th December 1857, one of the men of my regiment had his arm at the elbow shattered by a round-shot, and I determined to perform amputation above the elbow, on the field, so got the man well under a bank, and out of danger as I thought. Unfortunately, the camels with ammunition crowded round us; and just as I was about to commence the operation, a shell from one of the enemy's guns came amongst us, and striking one of the ammunition boxes on the nearest camel, not three yards from us, exploded and blew up the ammunition also. Bullets flew in every direction; but though several assistants and myself were there, not one of us was touched, even the camel escaping uninjured.

On the same day as the regiment to which I belonged was advancing in line, a shrapnel shell burst right over us and wounded a few of the men. One of the bullets struck an officer in high command (since dead), who with his staff was riding close behind the line. I saw that the bullet had torn his coat open from the shoulder half way down his back, and ran up to his assistance. I got him to dismount, and took him into a dry ditch, and as he was in the act of sitting down, a round-shot struck the top of the bank. Had he been standing erect, the shot would have carried off his head.

On the same day, the brother of this officer, to whose staff he was attached, received a very singular wound. A grape-shot struck the scabbard of his sword, touched his stirrup, and entered the outside of the left foot below a prominent bone (the cuboid), passed under the sole, and lodged on the inner side or arch of the foot, from which position I removed it. This was a very remarkable wound, in that no bone was broken or injured. This officer is alive at the present time, and has the use of his foot, though I have heard that he walks a little lame. I have not seen him since the day on which he was wounded.

At the siege of Lucknow, the chaplain attached to a Highland regiment was in his tent, and while in the act of opening a box, a round-shot fired at a high elevation came straight down through the tent, passed close to his head, struck the box he was in the act of opening, and rebounded, again almost striking his head in its rebound. This gentleman is at the present time minister of a Scotch parish, and may possibly read this, and remember the start he got, and how we laughed over it.

It is sometimes quite possible to see a cannon-ball in its flight, and easy to follow its course after it has once touched the ground; and I have more than once seen the ranks open, when the regiment was in line, to let a ball pass.

In the midst of danger, soldiers are sometimes prone to jest and laugh, and even play practical jokes on each other, as the following anecdotes will show. During the trench-work before Sebastopol, there was a certain man in the regiment who disliked being on duty in the trenches, and who always got into what he considered the safest corner of the trench, and remained there as long as he could. The bugler of his company, a malicious urchin, soon found this out, and was constantly in the habit of playing tricks to frighten his cautious comrade.

He would peep over the parapet and call out 'A shot!' and then turn round to see his friend roll himself together like a ball. At other times he would call out 'A shell!' of which he knew the man had a mortal dread; and when he saw him throw himself flat on the ground, he would take a piece of earth or a stone and throw it close to his recumbent friend's head, and then run up and comfort him by showing him a bit of an old shell which he had picked up for the purpose, remarking at the same time: 'That was a near thing, man.' All the men knew and enjoyed the joke, and sometimes roared with laughter; but it was well for the urchin that his friend never found him out.

This same man was really wounded afterwards, and while I was removing the bullet from beneath the skin of his back, the same 'urchin' was standing by, and the moment I had extracted the bullet—a small spherical one—the boy held out to his friend a six-pound cannon-ball, saying: 'See what the doctor has cut out o' ye!' This occurred while my back was turned; but on hearing the remark, I looked round, and saw the boy holding out the shot, and the bystanders convulsed with laughter, and quite regardless of the heavy fire going on around us.

THE ENFIELD COURT ROBBERY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

FROM further investigation, it was found that while the robbery at Enfield Court had been most carefully planned and premeditated, the fire had evidently been an accidental part of the thieves' programme, as a hastily done-up bundle, containing some valuable articles, was discovered just outside the supper-room window, as if dropped in a hasty exit. Happily, the fire had been subdued in time to save the greater portion of the house; but the damage done, to say nothing of the immense loss caused by the robbery, was very considerable.

In due time, two detectives came down from London, and the excitement continued unabated in the neighbourhood whilst they remained; but nothing transpired. They maintained an amount of stolid reticence, which to the curious was most provoking; and finally they departed without having apparently done anything towards solving the mystery, far less securing the thieves.

Gradually things seemed to settle down, and the robbery at Enfield was replaced in my mind by my entire absorption in Amy's engagement, to which I had given a qualified consent, on the condition that Mr. Mauleverer's family were satisfied with the connection, and that pecuniary matters were properly adjusted. Now that he had actually declared himself, I felt emboldened to ask questions and ascertain everything I possibly could as to the antecedents of the man who was to be my darling's husband.

He was well connected. His mother was dead; but his father was alive, and lived in great seclusion at his own property, which was situated in Yorkshire. He was reputed to be rich; but on this point I could gain no definite information. Still, remembering Lady Dacent's 'very well off,'

I was not much troubled on the score of money matters. I had felt it incumbent upon me to invite him to spend a few days with us before he left for Yorkshire, and it seemed natural that he should come to us. I told him frankly that Amy had very little money of her own—something less than two thousand pounds; but at my death, I intended to leave her everything, which I felt sure he would approve of being tied up and strictly settled upon herself.

I thought his expression changed a little when I mentioned this, and still more so when I casually asked him in a friendly way if he always meant to be an idle man; for he had left the army, it appeared; and I was anxious, for Amy's sake, to see some symptom of his wishing to get an appointment or occupation of some kind.

Meanwhile, Amy seemed satisfied; but my doubts—born of my extreme affection for her—began to arise, and refused to be silenced.

Mr. Mauleverer had written to his father announcing his engagement; but as yet neither line nor message from the old gentleman had reached us. It was not treating Amy properly; and though Amy's entreaties to me to be patient, and oft-repeated assurances that Alfred said everything would be all right, silenced me for a time, I was fully resolved to see matters either ended or placed on a satisfactory footing before much longer time elapsed.

In the meantime, Mr. Mauleverer received one morning a telegram, which he informed us contained the news of the illness of an old friend of his in London. He must start immediately, if he wished to see him alive. If I did not mind, he would leave his heavy luggage behind him, and only take a small portmanteau. Unless something very special happened to detain him, he would be with us again in a couple of days. His adieux were hurried, but impressive. He seemed really sorry to leave Amy, who was, however, enabled to bid him a cheerful good-bye on the strength of his speedy return.

On the morning of the second day after he had taken his departure, Amy was evidently expecting a letter from him—not unreasonably, I thought, as it was natural she should wish to hear that he had reached his destination safely. She was rather restless and fidgety. Perhaps that was the cause of my own almost nervous feelings as post-time approached. I could settle down to nothing.

'Amy, darling,' I said presently, 'suppose you take the garden scissors and snip these geraniums for me; they want it badly.'

So Amy stepped out on to the little lawn with its still brightly filled parterres; and I watched her from the drawing-room window with feelings of mingled love, anxiety, and apprehension, for do what I might, I could not get over the sense of some impending calamity—something sorrowful for her. Soon afterwards, she joined me, radiant with her letter, the first she had ever received from him; a very ardent, gentlemanly epistle. I was obliged to own; satisfactory too, as it contained the information that he had heard from his father, who, on certain conditions, which he saw his way to comply with, had promised to consent to the marriage. A letter for me from old Mr. Mauleverer had been inclosed in his letter to his son; but the latter preferred delivering it

to me personally; consequently, I would not receive it until his return to us.

Amy had an engagement that afternoon to visit the Dasents, who were now installed in a small house they had at some distance from the Court, whilst the latter was being repaired. She was to drive over, taking our small groom with her; and I was not to expect her back until after nine o'clock at the earliest; so I was to spend a solitary evening. After she left me, I wrote a few letters; then I tried to read; but my attention wandered. A slight drowsiness came over me, and I suppose I fell asleep. All at once I woke up with a consciousness of some one standing just outside the closed window, gazing into the room, and I discerned distinctly the features of a man's face pressed closely against the window-pane. I was not generally nervous, but I confess a thrill of fear shot through me then, and for a moment I was almost too terrified to stir. The next instant I got up, and simultaneously with my doing so, the face vanished. But the eyes I had so clearly seen might be watching me still. I controlled all outward symptoms of alarm or consciousness of what I had seen; and after a few minutes—to me each seemed an hour—I moved towards the door, and summoned one of my servants. I mentioned the circumstance to her, and enjoined extra care that night as to our bolts and bars. Though we had neither gold plate nor diamonds to attract thieves, still there was enough silver to satisfy moderate cupidity, and it was wonderful how such facts got abroad. After the Enfield Court robbery, one could not be too careful.

Very soon Margaret my servant had secured all the shutters, drawn the curtains, and I sat down to my solitary tea, wishing most fervently that Amy were safely within doors again.

A sudden storm had come on; the wind had risen to a hurricane, and bade fair to continue during the night. About eight o'clock, a message arrived for me from Lady Dasant, telling me that as the storm was so severe, they had ventured to detain Amy for the night; in the morning, she would be with me early.

I was both glad and sorry—glad that Amy would not run the risk of encountering any lurking individuals in the darkness; that she was safely at Enfield; but sorry for my own sake, I felt so solitary and, truth to tell, so strangely nervous.

The evening wore on slowly, and as ten o'clock struck I went to my room. It was directly over the drawing-room. Next to mine was Amy's; and on the other side of the landing was the spare room, which had so recently been occupied by Alfred Mauleverer. Above, slept the servants. I heard them go up to bed, and while I could hear them moving about overhead, I was tolerably comfortable; but soon, stillness reigned over the Wren's Nest. My domestics were asleep. The best thing I could do was to follow their example, which after a time I suppose I did, for I was awakened by a noise, a distant sound from the hall below. I scarcely breathed. I could hear my heart beating as I lay listening with strained ears, and recalling with horrified terror the face I had seen at the window.

I need hardly say that I was thoroughly awake. Every nerve was strung to such a pitch of tension,

that if a pin had been dropped, I feel sure I should have heard it. It came again—the sound from below—dull, this time, but distinct; and presently I heard stealthy footsteps coming rapidly and quietly up-stairs—evidently shoeless feet, but none the less audible to my ears. Never since I had lived at the Wren's Nest had I locked my bedroom door; I had a dread of doing it; and despite my nervousness on this occasion, I had not departed from my rule. It was too late to attempt to accomplish it now. Besides, looking back, I think a sort of temporary paralysis had come over me. I heard a hand laid upon the handle; it was turned cautiously, and the next moment, from my curtained bed I distinguished a man bearing some sort of small lamp—his face concealed by a mask—enter.

It was a matter of life or death to me to remain quiet. Through my mind flashed a resolve to deliver up everything I was possessed of—family plate, my mother's amethysts, all my small valuables, to this ruffian, in exchange for my life, should he demand them. But no such intention appeared to be his. He approached the bed, raised his lamp, flashed it for a second on my closed eyes; and then withdrew it, apparently satisfied that I slept. It must have been a cursory glance, for I could not have sustained the deception for more than a moment. He gave a keen look round the room. Only the lower part of his face was covered, so I could see his eyes, small, black, and piercing, with something familiar to me in them, even then. My watch—a legacy from my mother—lay on the toilet-table, but he overlooked it. Evidently, mine was not the room he meant to rifle. Almost noiselessly he vanished out of it, and I heard him proceed into Amy's room next—thank God, it was empty—then into the spare room, where he remained.

All at once it flashed across me that by a little courage I might save everything and secure the thief. In former days, my spare room had been a nursery, and the windows were barred, so as to make all exit from them impossible. If I could slip out of bed, get across the passage, in one second I could lock the door, and, secure from any attack, raise an alarm.

The agony of fear I was in was such that I felt equal to any effort. Without losing a moment, I glided out of bed; a moment's pause acquainted me with the fact that the miscreant was busy; I heard him throwing out things all over the floor. He was searching Mr. Mauleverer's portmanteaus; they were quite at the far end of the bedroom; so I calculated that I could safely close and lock the door before he could possibly prevent me. Like a ghost, I moved out of my room on my perilous errand. Through a chink of the half-open door I beheld the man kneeling in front of the larger of the portmanteaus, rifling it with a rapidity and intentness which secured my being for the present discovered. I had intended to seize the door the instant I reached it, but something made me pause in the darkness and peer with terrified eyes into the bedroom. He had his back to me, and I could see the quick movements of his arms as one thing after another was hurriedly thrown upon the ground.

Imagine my feelings as I stood within a few paces of him, to see him with the utmost celerity

tear open the lining of the portmanteau and draw from it a glittering mass of diamonds, which I instantly recognised as Lady Dasent's famous circlet, the one she had worn on the night of the eventful ball, and which, with the other things, had so mysteriously disappeared!

Horror, anguish, and fear well nigh caused me to fall to the ground. I made an involuntary movement; I thought I was fainting; and the noise reached him. Looking up, our eyes met. With the strength born of desperation, I seized the handle of the door, and in a moment the key was safely turned in the lock.

Happily for the lives of myself and my servants, the door was an old-fashioned one, of a particularly strong description; and having a strong outer moulding, it was almost a physical impossibility to break it open from the inside of the room. The exigency of the situation sustained me for the moment, and enabled me to rouse my three servants, who must at first have thought I had gone temporarily out of my mind, when I tried to make them comprehend our position.

It was two o'clock in the morning, still blowing a gale, and dark as Erebus. But assistance must be got. The man within our spare room might have accomplices without; our danger might but be beginning. We had an alarm-bell; that must be rung. Four trembling women, we proceeded in a group to the outer back court, where the bell hung, only to find the rope severed. I had snatched up a cloak, and arrayed myself in my slippers and a skirt. The servants were as little dressed as myself. But it was no time to hesitate; immediate action must be taken. We must rouse the gardener, who lived a considerable way from the house. Through the dark dripping shrubberies, we flew, at every step expecting to be dragged back by some lurker; but no one stopped us. In safety, we reached the cottage; and in a few minutes Arkwright, my gardener and general factotum, was in our midst.

His cottage was within a short distance of several others; and though he wished to go straight to the house, fearing lest the man should have escaped, or been liberated by accomplices, I would not hear of it. I insisted upon his getting a couple of men to accompany him, a precaution for which I saw Arkwright's nice little wife was grateful. This caused some delay; but it had not enabled my captive to escape. The hall door was found open, and everything just as we had left it, the spare room door still closed. By my orders, it was not to be unlocked until the police arrived. Several volunteers had hastened to summon them; and while we were awaiting their arrival, I had time to think a little of the horror of the position. How had Lady Dasent's diamond necklace found its way into Alfred Mauleverer's portmanteau? Could he be some awful impostor, some villain in the guise of a gentleman, whom I had harboured in my house, and to whom I had meditated giving my niece? The shock would almost kill Amy. Even I felt as if I should never get over it.

Who was the man? A dreadful tightness came over my heart when this question presented itself, a suspicion too horrible.

It made the suspense almost too terrible. I heard the policemen arrive, and while they were ascending the stairs to the spare bedroom, I felt almost choked with an apprehension for what I should next hear. The door was unlocked, and there was the thief. He made no resistance; the game was up. Thanks to 'the old woman,' as I heard him style me, he had missed the best chance of clearing a fortune he had ever had. Who was he? Where had I seen him?

The mystery was soon explained. He was the Dasents' magnificent head-butler—one of a gang, as it afterwards was discovered—and who had, with the connivance of his comrades, cleared off the plate, but hoped to secure for his own private benefit the famous diamonds. The fire had so far upset their plans, that he had found himself left in possession of the diamonds, when his services came to be required in aiding to extinguish the fire. In place of flight, therefore, as he had at first intended, the wary butler judged it best to let his confederates make off with the plate, while he remained with the diamonds in his possession, one of the most active in subduing the flames, and suggesting the most feasible schemes for discovering the thieves.

When the detectives came down to Enfield, it became imperative upon him to hit upon some safe place for the diamonds. Mr Mauleverer was blessed with an over-abundant wardrobe; and during his visit to Enfield, this butler had chosen to consider him under his particular care, laying out his clothes, arranging and settling things generally for him. The idea of temporarily depositing the precious gems within the lining of one of that gentleman's portmanteaus, struck him as a brilliant one. His intention of course was to withdraw them directly Mr Mauleverer's departure was about to take place, and he would of course have the best opportunity of doing so while packing his clothes; but his plan by a mere chance miscarried, and he had the mortification of seeing the portmanteau leave Enfield with the diamonds still safely secreted within it.

Mr Mauleverer's temporary absence from our house afforded too good an opportunity to be missed; hence the visit to the Wren's Nest, which very nearly terminated my existence, for the shock and exposure combined brought on an illness from which, for long, it was not expected I should recover.

Amy was my tender nurse all through it, and it was from her lips I heard all the particulars of the robbery, in the sequel to which I had been called on to play so prominent a part.

Happily for both our sakes, she never knew of the terrible suspicions I had for a brief time entertained regarding Mr Mauleverer. That gentleman made his appearance in due time at the Wren's Nest, bearing his father's letter, which informed me not only of his willingness to welcome Amy as his daughter, but to settle an income upon the young couple of the most satisfactory description.

Shortly afterwards, the butler was placed upon his trial, and I was called on, despite my weakened condition, to give evidence against him. This, however, I was happily spared, as the prisoner, acting on the advice of his counsel, pled guilty.

Indeed, I was doubly relieved, as Mauleverer's character was thus vindicated. As the wretched prisoner was being removed, he vowed he would 'pay Miss Courtenay a visit again when his term of imprisonment expired.' However, ten years' penal servitude may bring about a change in his intentions.

Lady Dasent amused me very much by the comforting view she took of the matter. 'Do not trouble your head, my dear Miss Courtenay, about anything the wretch may have said; in the course of nature, you will be beyond his reach long before then.'

'Quite true,' I replied with a smile. 'At all events, I am glad I have lived long enough to be the means of your recovering your diamonds.'

THE PARCELS' POST.

By an Act of Parliament passed in August, the Postmaster-general is authorised to add to the already varied work of the Post-office that of the carriage of parcels within the United Kingdom, according to the following moderate tariff, namely, not exceeding one pound, threepence; three pounds, sixpence; five pounds, ninepence; seven pounds, one shilling. The Act does not, however, prescribe the limits of size of the parcels to be so conveyed, nor the time at which the new scheme shall take effect, these points being left to the determination of the Postmaster-general; but as regards the latter, it is not likely that the scheme can come into operation until some time next spring. Meanwhile, all needful preparations are being made, and the new department of business will no doubt be brought into existence at the earliest possible moment.

To the ordinary individual who takes things as they come, and who does not concern himself with aims and means, the idea of a parcels' post presents itself as a simple arrangement for carrying packages, the only visible signs of which would be an office to take them in and a conveyance to deliver them. But to any one who has seriously reflected upon the vast and intricate machinery by which the operations of the Post-office are carried on, the labour of devising and setting up this new branch of business, and carrying its work into every nook and corner of the United Kingdom, must present itself as one of exceeding magnitude, necessarily demanding a large amount of anxious thought and foresight. When it is remembered that within our little kingdom there are some fourteen thousand post-offices, at each of which provision must be made for the new branch of work, and that at every one of these offices some persons must receive instruction in the new duties about to be imposed upon them; that the mode of delivery in every town and place in the country has to be planned and arranged (not the least troublesome of which will be the delivery along the routes of the rural posts); that a precise and fixed course must be laid down for the transit of the parcels' mails between each place and every other place in the country; that the heavier nature of the parcels' mails will probably revolutionise the mail-cart services along the high-roads—all of which things must be provided for at the outset; it will be understood that the Post-office department has

undertaken a task which will try its energies to the utmost.

That the scheme of the Parcels' Post will be placed on a satisfactory footing, so far as giving a thoroughly good service is concerned, there is little reason to fear. The acquisition and consolidation of the telegraphs have shown what a department of practical officials can do in putting together a large working concern; hence the experience gained by the executive of the Post-office in connection with telegraphs since 1870, will be eminently useful in the work which they have now in hand.

But apart altogether from the purely official aspect of the scheme, there are things to be considered as affecting trade, and the prosperity or otherwise of individuals, arising out of the coming boon to the country at large. Just as the opening up of the country by railway lines has had the effect of driving stage-coaches off the great highways, laying open new avenues to commerce, diverting business into new courses, and taking it away in many cases from the old, thereby bringing adversity to many towns which flourished under the old régime; so the Parcels' Post, by affording a cheap and ready means of obtaining light articles from a distance, will in all probability create disturbance in many branches of trade. It requires no stretch of the fancy to imagine that there will arise a rivalry between tradesmen in a large retail way in the great cities, and their less pretentious brethren in country towns; the former striving by means of advertisements and the Parcels' Post to supply country districts with their wares, the latter struggling to retain the share of business which they already possess. Haberdashers, stationers, tea-merchants, seedsmen, fashionable bootmakers, and smallwares people of all sorts in the larger towns, besides the great Stores in the Metropolis, will not be slow to discover an extended field for trade brought within range by the new post, and to take advantage of it; while country-people, finding the cost of conveyance for light articles to be but small, may frequently make their purchases in the larger markets, and no longer depend entirely upon local tradespeople.

Yet the country shopkeepers will not be without some compensating advantage; for the ease with which they will be able to procure supplies in small quantities, will enable them to maintain a more varied stock, and so be in a position to supply the neighbourhood with articles for the purchase of which it is now necessary to visit the larger towns. The farmer's wife will no longer need to delay purchases which are not of every-day occurrence, till she makes her periodical visits to the 'big town'; the village shopkeeper will either have the required articles in his more varied stock, or will be able to get them for her promptly and at a trifling cost for carriage. The precise way, however, in which trade will balance itself as between the large and small towns, will not be felt until the Parcels' Post shall have been some time in operation. There seems no reason why townspeople should not obtain fowls, butter, &c., if properly packed, direct from the farm; or why the people of Scotland should not enjoy the luxury of clotted cream direct from Devonshire; or the citizens of London receive

their grouse direct from country dealers in Scotland. But there are very many ways in which trade in light articles will be facilitated by the Parcels' Post; and one decided effect of the scheme will be the equalisation of prices for many articles of the same kind, which now have different values in different parts of the country.

The new post will also greatly encourage intercourse in social circles, by enabling friends to exchange presents more freely from all parts of the kingdom, the cost of sending parcels across country by existing means, acting as a bar to freedom of intercourse in this direction. How the amount of work will be met during Christmas seasons, is a matter for serious thought on the part of the Post-office; for the number of articles that will certainly be sent, as well as their aggregate weight and bulk, will far exceed anything which the railway Companies have hitherto had to contend with at that season.

Another period which will bring special strain upon the department will be the earlier days of the grouse season. Hitherto, sportsmen residing at shooting-lodges along the straths and glens in the Highlands, have been under the necessity of sending their boxes of game for despatch to the nearest railway station, perhaps many miles away; but in future they will no doubt seek, and expect to be relieved of these consignments by the rural postmen, or at the small post-offices in their neighbourhood. The boxes of game which are sent from the Highlands southwards during the shooting-season are numbered by thousands, and the disposal of these, superadded to the ordinary business, will tax the energies of the local post-office people to a large extent.

The simplicity of the tariff, and its uniformity in relation to distance, as well as its moderateness, must bring the service within the understanding and means of the poorest; and every post-office throughout the country being a depot to receive parcels, the scheme will be brought to the door of every one. Some idea of the extent to which the parcels' business will probably grow when the vast agency of the Post-office is set in motion, may be gathered from the experience of the telegraph department, the number of telegrams having increased during the past decade from twelve millions to nearly thirty-two millions annually. Thus, the whole country being brought into complete correspondence with itself, and its telegraph business having nearly trebled in ten years, it may be expected that a somewhat similar development will follow upon the inauguration of the Parcels' Post.

This new business of the Post-office must, however, prove vastly damaging to public carriers generally, the railway Companies excepted. Those carriers who make a trade of collecting parcels in the large towns, and of packing them for transit over the railways in bulk by goods-trains, will inevitably lose a great part of their business. The railway Companies will not suffer, however, for they will be partners with the Post-office, and will share in the business lost to the packers. The Post-office has acquired and maintains so great a prestige for punctuality and reliability, that no Company or undertaking in the country could withstand its competition.

It is impossible to predict what the financial result of the new scheme will be, nor for some

years is it likely that this will be ascertained. At the outset, there must be incurred great expense in providing additional space in all large offices, and in superseding rural foot-posts by horse-posts, over and above the cost of providing additional indoor staff at all important offices. How far the revenue will cover these expenses, experience alone will show. There is one thing at any rate that may be safely predicted, which is, that the new Parcels' Post will prove as great a public boon as the government monopoly of the telegraphs has done.

THE BLACK BUOY.

'SWIM?' said Grandmamma, as we sat round the crackling billets one Christmas Eve. 'Every boy and girl should learn to swim. Why, I could swim like a duck when I was a girl. Dear me, dear me!'

Grandmamma sat bolt upright in her high-backed chair, resting her elbows on the arms, and smiling across at Grandpapa—who sat on the other side of the hearth—with a conscious look in her bright old eyes. Grandpapa, the General, pausing in the act of raising his tumbler to his lips, nodded and smiled back again at Grandmamma. They were both white-haired, bright-eyed, and rosy-checked; both sat, straight and erect, in tall red-cushioned oak chairs; and each saw the other through an effacing medium, that smoothed out wrinkles, restored hyacinthine locks, and blotted out the fifty years that lay between them and youth.

Now, when we, the youthful descendants of this stately pair, grouped in lazy attitudes around the vast roaring hearth with its tall carved chimney-piece, saw the meaning looks that were exchanged between our respected progenitors, we scented a story. And when a many-voiced appeal for the story broke from us, Grandmamma hesitated for a moment and shook her head, then looked across to Grandpapa, who nodded again, and after a little pressing she thus began:

You know, young people, that you are of good family only on your Grandfather's side, and not on mine; for he came of an old and honourable stock, while my father was only a ship's bos'n. My father was killed in a great sea-fight, when I was only a little child, and I was brought up by my Grandfather, who was ostensibly a boat-builder and fisherman, in reality a smuggler. A successful smuggler too! In those days, smuggling meant great risks and enormous profits; for duties, especially on foreign wines and spirits, were exceedingly high. It was not only a profitable trade, but it was reputable in a peculiar sort of way; for it required great courage and great skill. England was always at war in those days, and the smuggler ran the risk of being snapped up by an enemy's cruiser as well as of falling into the clutches of a revenue-cutter. In addition, there were the inevitable chances and dangers of the sea. So that a good smuggler had to be

not only a man of great daring but of great knowledge of navigation. He had to work into harbour on the darkest nights—for it was only on dark nights that he could venture on 'a run'—with the utmost secrecy and despatch. To do that, he must know every inch of his way, be able to distinguish landmarks and buoys where an unpractised eye would only see indistinct blackness, and know to a nicety the time the tide turned, the twists of the sandbanks, and the position of sunken rocks.

My Grandfather could neither read nor write, and he had, as I think for that reason, a wonderful memory. He was assisted in his work by my two uncles, both illiterate men like himself; and the three seemed to find their way, through long practice and acute observation, as if by instinct. There was only one channel leading to the landing-place; the mouth of the little river where we lived being almost choked by sandbanks, which ran out to some distance. It was necessary to hit this channel a considerable way out at sea, and a small black buoy bobbed up and down to indicate its commencement. One side of the harbour was formed by a line of rocks, jutting out to some length and shelving down gradually into the water; and the buoy was distant from the extremity of these rocks about three-quarters of a mile. This headland was called the Point.

The black buoy, a mere speck on the waters, was hard enough for any one to find in the broad day; yet my Grandfather never failed to find it in the dark—for of course it was only on a moonless night that he could hope to run a cargo. The usual course of proceeding was this. The lugger arrived off our coast at nightfall, lay to until a signal was flashed from our friends on shore, and then found the entrance to the channel, and worked in with the tide. It was necessary to be very careful in hitting-off the channel at first, where the buoy was, or they might ultimately run on the sunken rocks at the extremity of the Point.

Grandfather and I lived in a pretty cottage at one extremity of the village. Our house was better than most of the others, for Grandfather had money in the bank, and was well to do. The cottage was covered with honeysuckle and creepers; at the back was a well-stocked kitchen-garden; in front was a grassy bank sloping down to the sand, at its junction with which stood our wooden boathouse. By the boathouse lay three or four of our boats, broad, strong, and unwieldy; and opposite the boathouse were the moorings of the *Little Lady*, our naughty, fast-sailing, clever little lugger.

I had a very independent, irregular kind of life. My Grandfather was often away for days at a time, and the old woman who looked after the house—for Grandmother was dead long since—would have had little time for scouring and cleaning if she had tried to look after me. I got

a little book-learning from the old vicar, but it was not enough to hurt me. No, my dears; I knew no Italian, or Latin, or Algebra; but my eyes were none the less bright, my lungs none the less clear, my colour none the less blooming that I passed most of my days in the bright sunshine and the free fresh air. I could run a couple of miles and jump a gate; I could pull an oar with the best, and I could swim like a duck. I was thoroughly at home either on the water or in it. The sea had no terrors or difficulties for me except such as it was a pleasure to overcome. So at sixteen, I am told, I was a fresh-coloured, free-limbed, bright-eyed young maid, whose only trouble was her long tresses of thick brown hair, and who bothered her head very little with the other sex.

Not but what I had my admirers. But they were limited in quantity and coarse in quality. I mean, rough; manly enough, but lacking in that refinement which a young girl in any rank of life always longs for, and with sometimes sad results. Anyhow, the bold young fishermen who made sheepish overtures to my formidable self, excited nothing on my part but polite amusement, and I was quite heart-whole. I was very happy, had a wonderful appetite, was sound in mind and limb; and perhaps, young people, you have to thank the rough freedom of my early life for the excellent constitutions which you now enjoy.

On a certain day in September, when I was nearly seventeen years of age, my Grandfather being absent on one of his expeditions and expected back at night, I set off for one of the long rambles in the country which I was in the habit of taking when he was away. As I was not allowed to go off in this fashion when Grandfather was at home, I made a big day of it, starting immediately after breakfast, and taking some bread and meat with me for dinner. I rambled much farther than I intended, lost my way more than once, and the night was coming on apace when I returned. Tired and footsore, I was taking a short cut over the heathery cliffs, where was only a narrow track made by the sheep, when amidst my dreamy anticipations of supper and bed came the recollection of a little serge bathing-suit which I had meant to fetch in the morning in order to repair it. The little cave where I kept it was among the rocks of the Point, and from where I was, being already on the seaward side of the village, it was not far distant. So I stepped out briskly and soon came to the little gully or ravine in the rocks which led to my cave, and up which, in the course of the night, our smuggled treasures would be stealthily conveyed. Carts used to stand at the upper end of it to take them away.

I slipped into my cave, felt for my dress and found it, and too lazy just then to face the ascent up the gully again, stood gazing out to sea and wondering where my Grandfather was at that moment. Then I turned homewards. I had got about a third of the way up the gully, which was very dark, when I heard a strange sound. I stopped to listen. It was not the scream of a sea-bird nor the moaning of the sea. It came down the gully and drew nearer, beat, beat,

with a little, very distinct jingling sound. It was the tramp of men and the clink of steel. Soldiers! I had never seen any; but I guessed what they were. In a moment I had scrambled cautiously up the rocks, and, hidden behind a ledge, I crouched perfectly still, with every sense on the alert. Suddenly the measured tramp ceased, and presently two men came slowly down the gully, talking in low voices. They wore long cloaks, and their weapons jingled as they walked. They passed me and stood at the lower end of the gully. The air was very still, and I could hear every word they said.

'This is the place, sir,' said the bigger and stouter of the two. 'The goods are landed a little to the left here, carried up the gully, and received at the top by the carts. The carts stand where we came down.'

The other, who, by the ease of his bearing and the deference of the big man, I took to be an officer, had a paper in his hand. He looked around him, evidently taking in the features of the place.

'There won't be any carts to-night, sergeant,' he said in a pleasant voice. 'The people in the village know we are here, and are sure to warn them. I hope they won't manage to warn the man we want.'

'Not they, sir,' answered the sergeant confidently. 'Not a boat can leave the harbour without its being stopped by our men; and not a man can leave the village and come in the direction of the Point, if you post the men as I venture to suggest.' Here the conversation became inaudible for a moment. 'A man at the top of the gully, sir, and the others at intervals on the seaward side of the village. You and I, sir, to manage the signal down here, and then I step up to the man at the top of the gully, one calls in another, and we are all down here ready to receive them.'

'By all means,' said the officer; 'and as you know the place and I don't, you had better post the men.—By the way,' he added, scanning the paper in his hand and holding it close to his eyes, 'at twelve-thirty, I think it is, the signal. You undertake that, don't you?'

The sergeant produced something, probably a lantern, from under his cloak. 'Here is the signal, sir.'

'Then we're right.—Now, post the men.'

The sergeant saluted and clanked up the gully; while the officer walked slowly towards the water and stood at the edge—some distance from me, for the tide was getting low—with his head bowed, and his hands clasping the paper behind his back. I ventured to breathe freely again, and began to review the situation. What did it all mean? It meant that the authorities had got wind of my Grandfather's doings, and had sent this detachment of soldiers to take him in the act. It must be my Grandfather, because there was no one else in the village likely to be aimed at. And if they caught him, what then? What was this form of words that kept ringing in my ears over and over again? 'Transportation for life!' What was that? It was no uncommon punishment, I had heard, for a smuggler taken, as my Grandfather was likely to be, red-handed. For a moment the hope flashed into my head that he

might not come that night. But no! The wind was light, and not unfavourable; there was no suggestion of a fortunate storm in the sky, and I knew that our friends with the wagons had arranged to come and that all was in readiness. My heart sank within me as I thought of my old Grandfather's gray hairs dishonoured in the felon's dock—for I had once seen a man tried—and his kind old face bidding me farewell for ever. I bowed my head on my hands and longed to cry.

Suddenly I raised my head, and my heart beat with a bold resolve. I would save him. Yes, I! The skill that I had attained for my own heedless pleasures should be put to stern service. My resolve was this. When the lugger showed her signal in answer to that treacherous one from the shore, I would swim out to the buoy, and keep myself afloat at the entrance of the channel until I could hail our people and warn them of their danger.

I never hesitated after I had formed this resolution. I forgot that I was tired and hungry, put aside the thought of cold or exhaustion in the water, and began instantly to make my preparations. On the narrow ledge of rock where I now knelt, I undressed and put on my little bathing-dress, which consisted only of a tunic and drawers. My own clothes I made into a bundle and stowed away behind a stone. Then, like a cat, I clambered up the rocks, hiding behind every projection, and keeping a fearful watch upon the sentinel at the head of the gully. Fortunately, the gully was not very deep. When I got to the top, I crept on my hands and feet until I judged I was well out of sight, and started for the end of the Point. I took my time, for there was no hurry, and I had to husband my strength; and at last I reached the rock from which I meant to start. There I sat down to wait.

I did not know the time and could only guess it by calculating from the sunset. How long should I have to wait? How long did I wait? Heaven knows; but it seemed an age. I got sleepy from my day's exertions. The night-air was cold too, and my clothing, however well adapted for exercise, was somewhat scanty for sitting in. Besides, it was damp. The wretchedness of that long watch comes over me now. Oh! would the slow minutes never pass!

Thicker and thicker grew the gathering darkness. The waters and the heavens were blended in obscurity, and there, at the end of the rocks, I sat patiently, a poor little figure shivering in the gloom, listening to the lap of the waves as they beat upon the rocks, and peering out to sea with all my heart in my eyes. I waited so long that I believed I must have fallen asleep and missed the signal, and at the thought I was burying my face in my hands, to give way to despair, when something stopped me—and flash! far out on the dark sea, there it was! I sprang to my feet, every nerve tingling. The moment for action had arrived.

I paused for a moment to picture to myself the bearings of the buoy. I knew exactly how it lay from the Point, for I had swum round it often enough. But not in the dark! Not with the water a vast black plain mingling with the black sky; not with the fear of sinking to those

mysterious depths, unseen, unheard, unhelped. But I never hesitated. Into the cold flood I plunged, and struck out boldly in the direction I had determined upon. After a few vigorous strokes, the sense of active exercise, exultation in physical power and use of skill, overcame my misgivings. But they came on again when I looked around on that murky waste of waters. Could I be sure I was going in the right direction? Might I not swim and swim and never find that of which I was in search, lose myself and become exhausted—to sink beneath that silent sky, alone?

But on I went, struggling hard to keep my wits about me in spite of the horrors that would rush over my brain again and again. It was hard physical work too, for the tide was coming in; there were breakers in the shallows, and in the channel the stream was fast and strong. It was impossible to see more than a few yards ahead, level as I was with the water. With the tide running so hard against me, it was difficult to judge how far out I had succeeded in getting. Once I all but gave up. I got out of the channel among the breakers, and the buffeting and beating bewildered me, so that I fell into a sort of pania. I throw myself on my back, and in the very act—thanks to my practised eyesight, that could more or less see in the dark—I caught sight of the buoy. There it was, bobbing up and down, looking to me like a thing of life. I swam to it and kept close by. It was like a friend in all this desolation of heaving seas. But now came the worst watch of the whole. The lugger must inevitably pass within hail of me; but what if my strength gave out before she came? For my strength was ebbing fast. I had been without food since noon, I had walked many miles, swimming is an exacting exercise, and I had still to exert myself resolutely with the tide running fast, to maintain my present position. My limbs moved mechanically, my head was dull and heavy, and there was a sort of tingling in my ears. I knew I was going fast.

A little gleam of parting waters, a black mass looming blacker than the darkness, and I summoned all my energies for a shout. '*Little Lady, ahoy!*'

A voice came from the darkness. '*Little Lady* it is. Who are you?'

'Lay to, and throw a rope over your starboard quarter.'

The lugger was not thirty yards distant. I made my last effort and swam to her. A rope was thrown; they hauled me on board; and I had just time to give my warning before I fell fainting on the deck.

When I came to, the last keg of our cargo was being lowered into the sea. We were some little distance up the coast, and floats were attached to the kegs so that we might be able to find them again. So expeditiously was all this done that it was only some two hours afterwards when we beat cautiously up the channel and cast anchor opposite the mouth of the gully. We pulled ashore in our boat. As she grounded and we leapt out, dark figures started up around, lights flashed upon us, and we were surrounded by soldiers.

'In the King's name,' said the young officer, advancing with his sword drawn and his cloak thrown back to show his scarlet uniform.

It was a picturesque group illuminated by the flickering light of the soldiers' torches. My tall, old Grandsire with his weather-beaten face and gray hair; the boyish, handsome young officer, bright with scarlet and steel; the stolid seamen in their blue jerseys and sou'-westers; the soldiers with their bronzed faces and glittering accoutrements; and, I suppose, myself keeping under shelter of my stalwart Grandsire, disguised as I was in a suit of oilskins and a big sou'-wester that almost covered my rebellious hair.

My Grandfather said nothing when the young lieutenant ordered the sergeant to board the lugger, and only a quiet twinkle of his keen gray eye showed his enjoyment of the scene. He stood looking up at the sky, while the lieutenant kept his eyes fixed on the ground and toyed with his sword-belt. The soldiers had to row, and clumsily enough they did it, provoking one of the stolid seamen to a loud guffaw which was instantly suppressed.

The sergeant was back again pretty soon, his red face turned to purple with wrath. 'We've been made fools of, sir,' he exclaimed, saluting the lieutenant. 'Nothing on board except some nets.'

The lieutenant's face fell for an instant; then he looked at the sergeant's wrathful countenance, and bit his lips to keep from smiling.

The sergeant was at white-heat. 'With your permission, sir, I'll search these fellows,' says he.

'If you like,' answered the lieutenant carelessly.

The search was soon accomplished, and they found nothing that they wanted. I kept behind my Grandfather's back, hoping to escape observation. But the sergeant caught me by the wrist. My Grandfather interposed.

'There is nothing contraband on that boy,' said he peremptorily.

'We'll soon see that,' answered the soldier, grasping my wrist until I could have screamed with pain.

My Grandfather did not strike him, but administered a kind of push with his heavy shoulder that sent the sergeant, big as he was, staggering a yard or two. With the loosening of his hold, I slipped and almost fell; off went my sou'-wester, and down, alas! streamed my long brown hair all over me. The young officer instantly stepped between the sergeant and me.

'I don't think we need search this youngster,' he said in a tone of quiet authority. 'He is not likely to have anything contraband about him.—Where have you been to-night?' he added, turning to my Grandfather, while I got into the background, conscious that the young gentleman's quick eyes had found me out.

'Lobster-fishing,' answered my Grandfather unblushingly.

'Not much sport, I'm afraid,' said the lieutenant, looking abstractedly over my Grandfather's shoulder.

'Not a great deal,' answered my Grandfather. 'But we've taken as much as you, sir. Perhaps you would like to come with us some time and we might do better.'

'Perhaps I will,' answered the officer, still glancing over the other's shoulder. 'Meanwhile,

I am sorry to have caused you or yours any annoyance. Good-night to you.—Fall in, men!’

And away they went.—But my Grandfather gave up the trade after that and sold the lugger.

Grandmamma paused, and looked at Grandpapa with a smile.

‘And did you never see the lieutenant again after that?’ inquired a bright girl of fourteen, with long brown hair, probably like what Grandmamma’s once was.

‘My dear,’ said Grandpapa, ‘I was the lieutenant.’

A WORD OR TWO UPON FRIENDSHIP.

FRANCIS BACON closes his essay on Friendship by saying that ‘where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.’ We cannot conceive a more wretched existence than to be entirely without friends. Unhappy indeed must that man be whose life has become so depraved and selfish, that in counting up all his acquaintance, the reflection forces itself on him: ‘I have not a friend in the world.’ Well indeed may Bacon say ‘he may quit the stage.’ He that would have friends, ‘must show himself friendly;’ and therefore, if it chance that any read this who are inclined to say, ‘I have no friends,’ let them be sure that the fault is, as likely as not, entirely theirs, and not that of the multitude around them.

Men are too apt to lament over the fickleness of friendship, which indeed is deeply to be deplored; yet in nine cases out of ten, if inquired into, it will be seen that this was due to their own fault in choosing such a friend, or to their own indiscreet actions subsequently. The first and most important step is in the choice of friends; and for this, it is very necessary that one should consider the object of friendship, and prove slowly—step by step—that there is such a communion of feeling and unity of purpose as can alone make friendship firm and lasting. If we desire to form a friendship for some particular object that we have in view, but cannot otherwise obtain, then our motive is unworthy, and we must not be surprised at finding a sudden cessation of the friendship before that object is gained. As friendship is slow in its growth, so it should be tough and lasting in its endurance; and there should be the greatest charity and forbearance on both sides ere one link of the golden chain which binds it is rudely snapped asunder.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-latched, unfledged comrade.

Friends should be few—that is, those whom we would retain as bosom-friends; and they should be those on whom we can depend, for some firm and solid reason other than a mere sentiment, which may be changed and altered by more powerful motives; for any feeling that is based on sentiment only, and has no solid reasons to support it, must in time alter as that fact becomes apparent. There are few who can enter into the deep and earnest friendship which David so feelingly describes as between him and Jonathan:

‘Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.’ A man’s duties and every-day work would in many cases preclude him from cementing friendships of so close and sacred a character. Time or opportunity might not admit of his communicating and interchanging thoughts, feelings, and ideas which would be necessary to insure and foster them. But he may be on terms of friendship in different stages and degrees with every fellow-creature with whom he comes in contact. It is not too much to say that there is some spark of goodness even in the most degraded of our race, and therefore it should be the anxious endeavour of every one desirous of obtaining friendship to find the common ground of association between himself and his fellow-man; to claim it and cherish it, and gain a friend on that one ground, if all beside should proclaim rather an enmity—but which a friendly nature would be careful not to declare in an unfriendly way. So in all our troubles and cares, our anxieties and misfortunes, our pleasures, our joys, our successes, we would have a multitude of sympathising friends; and they would be *real* friends in the degree that we have thoughts in common; and by the common tie and feeling we could always claim them. We should not mistake as friends mere acquaintances of whom we know nothing; or familiar faces. The chances are that there are many whose names we do not even know, more firmly united to us in friendship by the bonds of common feeling, hopes, and inspirations, than those to whom we are accustomed to bid ‘good-morrow.’ True friendship is a noble thing, and there are many instances of its perfection.

Some one may say: But what is the use of friendship? It is this—the intermingling of ideas and affections with each other, which, if fully carried out, would bind humanity with an encircling cord, rendering wars and tumults impossible, and the diffusion of the arts of peace and domestic comfort more practicable. In the narrower sphere of individuals, as Bacon says, ‘It is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds cause and induce; for as there are diseases of stoppings and suffocations most dangerous to the body, so are there also to the mind. We take medicine for the one; but no receipt openeth the heart like a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatever lies upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.’ The loss of fortune often is the forerunner of the loss of ‘friends,’ so called, but who in reality are none; merely attendants on fortune, and for whom, if we acted wisely, we should have no other feeling except of pity. And to guard against such disaster, let us remember that it is not the fawning professor who is most likely to prove the ‘friend in need.’

Friendship real and true is that which suffers even death for its friend; that no hardship or trial or adversity can shake off, using plain and outspoken admonitions and warnings in prosperity, and kind and gentle advice and assistance in adversity.

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INFERIOR SOCIETY.

WE suppose there are few persons who do not believe in 'the deteriorating influence of inferior society.' Even the thoughtless, if made for a moment to think, and the vain, who love to be associated with flatterers, would, if urged to confession, admit the evil they often so heedlessly encounter. But what is inferior society? That is the question which has to be considered, detached from all its surroundings, and finally answered, before we can arrive at definite conclusions to help us forward.

Certain democratic writers of fiction are rather fond of choosing for their heroes and heroines low-born persons, often the mere waifs of society, endowing them with almost superhuman virtues, and a strength of purpose and of innate rectitude which enables them to triumph over all evil temptations, and win for themselves an exalted and honourable position. Far be it from us to say that there have not been such careers as these novelists indicate, bright examples of what can be done under difficulties; but if they were the ordinary rule of circumstances, there would be little need of schools and reformatories, and of the elaborate machinery which governments and individuals put in force to educate and civilise and elevate a nation.

Perhaps only those who have been brought into contact with that most forlorn of all created things, 'a neglected child,' can estimate how much we all owe to early training, to the fostering of good instincts, and the crushing out of evil ones, and can comprehend the terrible disadvantage at which the very ignorant are placed. But the ignorant man or woman who has sense enough to be aware of his or her ignorance, and who eagerly takes advantage of every opportunity of enlightenment, ought not to be classed with those who exert a deteriorating influence when brought into contact with their superiors. On the contrary, such individuals often stimulate for good those to whom they look up for guidance. There could be no learning or moral progress in the

world, if there were not a certain association of teacher and pupil, of the wise and the foolish, the good and the bad.

Now, as in most lives a vast amount of knowledge is almost unconsciously acquired, and surrounding influences go far to mould character, the mingling of different orders of mind to which we have alluded is a great boon to the inferior ones—it is their chance of moral and mental improvement. But there is a danger to the so-called superiors, if their superiority is more apparent than real. Every one has heard the story of the parrot which, having learned on board ship a number of oaths and vulgar phrases, terribly shocked the lady to whom it had been consigned as a present. But the bird was a beautiful creature; and the owner desiring that it should be trained to speak with propriety, sent it to keep company with a more carefully educated parrot belonging to a friend, in the hope that the stranger would forget its oaths and sailors' jargon and acquire a different vocabulary. Alas for the result! The new arrival quickly contaminated the other bird, which learned the objectionable phrases that were so much deplored, without imparting its own pretty little speeches and snatches of song to the culprit.

Perhaps if the indecorous bird had been introduced to two or three properly conducted parrots, instead of to only one, the good influence would have been strong enough to prevail, and the offender might have become a reformed character, instead of the corrupter of another. This old story of the two parrots has always seemed to us to point a moral, and show how necessary it is that in organising our society, the good, when necessarily brought into contact with the evil, should, in numbers or in strength, prevail over the bad.

Few families are so fortunate as never to have experienced the evil of a vicious influence operating on some of its members. It may have been speedily apparent, and speedily vanquished accordingly; or it may have been subtle and specious, and have done great mischief before

it was even suspected. In either case, the sort of 'inferior society' at which we are glancing is quite as likely to have been on what is called a social equality as not. Low-toned people, who corrupt morals by their bad example and evil communications, belong to all stations of life.

How often does it happen that a plausible acquaintance establishes a footing of intimacy with some young person, and without planning any special injury, achieves it nevertheless. There are so many by-paths of alluring aspect in life, but which lead to misery, that we all, and the young especially, are in constant need of the controlling sense of duty to keep us in the high-road. Woe be to those who have a tempter at hand to lure them astray, and to teach them to confound pleasure with happiness, if such tempter wears the mask of friendship, and has won their regard! Those who understand children best, are always alive to the importance attached to the choice of youthful playmates and associates, even from the earliest age. For the exercise of the imitative faculty seems instinctive with most children, and biographies of eminent people, especially autobiographies, constantly reveal the lasting influences set in motion in quite infantile years.

But the imitative faculty is not extinct when childhood is past, and there is an order of shy people who are particularly exposed to the temptations of inferior society. What we call shyness is often very closely allied to pride. There are people who take little or no pleasure in any society in which they do not themselves shine. They forgo the high esteem in which a patient and intelligent listener is held by good talkers, and feel hurt at seeming of no consequence. Such shy people are very apt to fall away from the social circles in which they might find mental improvement and enlightenment, and gravitate to a lower scale, where they feel themselves of importance. The worst of the matter is that such persons are almost always self-deceivers, and think their shyness comes from humility instead of pride. Another sort of shyness, springing from another sort of pride, induces people to shun general society altogether; and then they need be on their guard against some baneful individual influence of an inferior sort. This is especially the case with shy young men, who make what are called low marriages, or, what is really morally worse, trifle with the affections of girls in an inferior station. Perhaps at first they mean nothing worse than the gratification of their own vanity; but some of the saddest of sad stories have had this sort of beginning.

We once heard a very shrewd sensible woman, the mother of a large family, speak to the following effect: 'My husband and I are very choice in considering the acquaintances we now make, for our children's sake. Our friends' children will, in the natural course of events, be their friends,

and perhaps even more closely allied, and we feel that we cannot be too particular as to the intimacies we may form.' They were wise words; for the hasty, ill-considered, unfortunate intimacies of youth are often found to be a clog all through life.

Young people whose characters as yet are but partially developed, are very apt to strike up sudden friendships on the basis of some temporary and superficial sympathy which has no real depth. Ardent professions of attachment are made—perfectly sincere for the time being—but often circumstances arise which develop character and change the position of affairs. One mind greatly expands, while the other either stagnates or deteriorates; one moral nature, strengthened by some fiery trial, rises purified; while the other succumbs to some grovelling temptation. It is impossible the tie between the two can remain unstrained, for sooner or later it must be broken. In such cases as these, the lower nature too often reviles the higher for its 'changeableness' and 'caprice,' though probably the change of feeling has been resisted as long as possible, and only acknowledged at last to the conscience with great pain. Well is it if there has been no obligation conferred by the inferior nature on the superior, to be considered a life-long debt incapable of being cancelled.

But there is one sort of 'inferior society' which is perhaps even more 'deteriorating' in its influence than the companionship of low-toned people. If it be true that Books are 'the best of all good company,' the adage can only apply to good books; for it is no whit less true that bad books are the worst of all companions. Many books are very subtle in their evil influence, so subtle, that the mischief they do is long unsuspected. And yet we think there is a test by which we may know the wholesome from the evil in literature. Does the reader feel stronger and wiser—more ready for work and endurance, with a higher ideal of duty and character, and of the possibilities of human life, when he lays down the book which has engaged him? If so, he may be sure that he has enjoyed 'the best of all good company,' and will, moreover, have acquired a distaste for that which is poorer.

The subtle bad book, however, leaves a very different impression. The reader probably rises from it discontented and querulous, inclined to excuse his own faults, as so much more venial than those of the people in whom he has just been interested; with his ideal of duty and human character lowered instead of raised, and with a general sense of disorder in his mind, that proves the unwholesome food it has been receiving. The present writer has assisted at the burning of more than one thoroughly bad book, and is ready to apply the match again whenever it is expedient to do so. We never know into what hands a bad book may some day fall, or what mischief it may occasion; but when we see the pages

yielding to the flames, at least we feel that with regard to that one copy its power is over. Bad books always deserve condign punishment, and there is a consolation in knowing that sooner or later they will find it. Truth alone prevails in the long-run. Truth, that moral truth which through all the ages finds a response in the higher attributes of the human heart, can alone float a book down the stream of time, and render it a delight to succeeding generations.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLV.—‘CONSTANCE! MAYBE GOD WILL BE GOOD, AND LET ME SEE YOU HAPPY, AS YOU NEVER COULD HAVE BEEN IN THIS WORLD.’

DAYS before Garling's death, Constance and Val had left Cadiz on their homeward route, and Mary had travelled with them in attendance upon her mistress. Constance had written to her aunt Lucretia, telling her of the new hopes and fears which dwelt about her, and entreating a renewal of her old friendship. The old lady came down, in answer to this letter, to meet her at Southampton, and received her very kindly; but she encountered her ancient favourite Val Strange with inexplicable and inflexible enmity. ‘Don't tell me, my dear,’ she said in answer to her niece's remonstrances; ‘he left you alone at the beginning of your sufferings. I know it all. Everybody has talked about it. He was a faithless friend, to begin with, and he's a bad husband; and I will never speak to him again.’

‘He is not a bad husband,’ Constance answered, weeping. ‘We have had cause for trouble, and we have been unhappy, but never, never, through any want of love on either side! And dear aunt, help us to be happy now. We shall have cause to be happy now.’

Aunt Lucretia wept with her, and relented partially, for Constance's sake. But against Val she was implacable, and she treated him with a distant coldness which pained him deeply. The elder Mr Jolly met the little party in town, having constrained himself to leave Paris in honour of the expected event; for which, without anybody precisely knowing why, he seemed to appropriate to himself an amazing credit.

‘My dear Valentine,’ he said, as Val sat moodily over his wine and a cigar, after dinner, on his first night in England, ‘it has always been my practice to endeavour to make the best of everything. We have proverbs on our side: ‘Love laughs at locksmiths, and ‘All's fair in love and war. And apart from the romantic and sentimental aspect which, to eyes more youthful than mine, the case may wear, I console myself with the reflection that the marriage is a *fait accompli*. Your proceeding, I presume I may acknowledge without any danger of offence, and certainly without any intention of being offensive, was—er—a little startling. But all that is over; and you are prepared to encounter the commonplace of life, and I presume to stay at home, become *custos rotulorum*, and discharge the duties of a good landlord. I have always maintained that the one claim a father has to consideration in affairs of this kind is that he is interested in his daughter's

happiness. I am not without the emotions common to paternity; but I have never been inclined to obtrude my anxieties, and I will not obtrude them now.’

Val said ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ and ‘Of course’—at the right places, for the most part; and Mr Jolly was absolutely satisfied with him, and with himself. When they all left London, he was established in free quarters in Val's house at Brierham; and he felt a pleasurable glow in the fact that this eligible family mansion was henceforth his daughter's home, and that in those days when Paris might seem dull to him, he would find a shelter here. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that had Val been poor instead of wealthy, Mr Jolly's ideas on the moral and sentimental aspect of the elopement might have undergone development in a different direction. Val himself was filled with anxious thoughts; but he too, like Constance, looked for a veritable sacrament of love in the birth of a child. But his emotions were not of that boisterous and thick-skinned quality which can bear to find vent in the presence of strangers; and thus, except in those now rare moments when he and his wife were alone together, he wore rather a morose and preoccupied air. Miss Lucretia set this down to a desire on his part to be away from the place, and charged him in her own heart with a perpetual longing after the fleshpots of a bachelor's Egypt. Not all Constance's faith in her husband's affection, nor Val's own constant presence in the house, could weaken this belief of hers. Women can be amazingly cruel on occasion, and the old maiden lady relented not to Val. He bore everything with patience, even with seeming apathy, strengthened inwardly by new hopes, and chastened by fears new and old.

In the midst of all this, news reached him that Gerard Lumby had returned, and had again taken up his residence at Lumby Hall. Before Constance had recalled him to her side, he had fallen into such a mood that he would not greatly have cared had he been called upon to expiate his falsity to friendship with his life. But now he had a reason for living, and he meant to live. He listened anxiously for tidings of Gerard and his manner of living; and such small items of news as reached him were reassuring. The defeated rival seemed at length to have settled down, accepting his defeat. Val had no wish to remember against him that wild night in the Mediterranean. He knew he had given horrible provocation; and he even looked to his own devotion to Constance as one means of appeasing Gerard's hatred. He laid plans for the future, and resolved, if things went well with him, that he would migrate to another county. He did himself more justice when he admitted that Gerard would find it unpleasant to have him for a constant neighbour; and since it seemed well that one of them should move to a distance, it seemed well that he should be the emigrant. He had robbed Gerard of enough already. He would not rob him of the house in which his ancestors had lived so long, by poisoning the air about it.

Let me say once more that Val Strange was not meant by nature to live disloyally. But fate is just, and his very virtues tore him.

Gerard in Cadiz had asked Hiram one question:

'Is she here?' Mary's unlooked-for presence had dictated this inquiry.

'She is,' Hiram had responded. 'She's goin' to England, and her husband's with her.'—Gerard started, and paled over so little; but Hiram watched him with glittering eyes which missed nothing.—'They're going home for a special purpose. I reckon if it turns out a son, that when he's grown up, he'd like to feel he'd been born in the ancestral halls. Anyhow,' added Hiram, 'I guess I should, if I was going to be born over again as a British aristocrat.'

Not even Hiram had rightly estimated the purposes which moved Gerard to the reckless and horrible revenge he had once attempted. He was not avenging his own wrongs, but the wrongs done to Constance by her husband's desertion of her. He did not understand, he did not even dream, that the thought of his own sufferings, and their disloyalty to him, had cast the shadow which lay like an impassable barrier between man and wife. To his mind, Val had been doubly a traitor—false to him, and false to the woman he had stolen from him. It was the belief in the second falsity which had stirred him to the contemplation of that crime which it was Hiram's happy fortune to frustrate. It was not likely that Val's return to his old home after so remarkable a disappearance from it, should go untalked of. The general verdict had been unfavourable to him at his going, and it was unfavourable still. Had Miss Lucretia's tongue been less active, it might have been otherwise; for a wealthy, good-looking, good-tempered young fellow, who has the loveliest woman in a county for his wife, is likely to be popular, and to find more serious crimes than a runaway marriage forgiven him. Even the parting at Naples, and Val's extended cruises in the Levant, would have been condoned and forgotten; but it was murmured everywhere that Mrs Strange's aunt knew the naughty secret of their parting—that Val was guilty, and that she was implacable. After the lapse of a year from the date of his tragedy, foolish people felt justified in hinting at these things even in Gerard's presence, and the rumours reached him in a hundred ways.

A slow, bitter, awful fire of wrath burned in the young man's heart. By nature and descent, loyal and honest, but by nature and descent disposed to nurse revenge, his native virtue and his native vice of blood alike spurred him to hate his enemy. He said of himself, and it was true, that he would have roasted at a slow fire, rather than have deceived a friend as Val had deceived him. His own purity of honour made Val's dishonour all the viler. Yet even then, had Val continued true to Constance, and had she seemed happy with him, there was enough of heathen valour in the man to have hidden hatred and heartburning for a lifetime. But now, to his distorted gaze, Revenge stood consecrated by Hate and Scorn. He could leave Garling to the vengeance, or even the mercy of heaven, without an inward struggle. But Garling had not sought to rob him of his love; and Garling had missed his own prize, and had grown old on a sudden, and was near death's door, and had but a tottering reason left him; whereas this supreme criminal had succeeded in his crime, and having stolen his treasure, had thrown it

away. We know how false the popular talk was; but he did not. It found ready credence with him, and there was no baseness, however unexampled, of which he was not ready to believe that Val Strange had been or would be guilty.

But he, like the rest of us, was led by a way he knew not.

As the hoped-for yet dreaded time grew nearer in the house at Brierham, Val and Constance grew nearer to each other in confidence and affection. They looked forward, though with certain tremblings and forebodings, to a happy and united life. The child would lay a hand on each, and would hold them together to all times. But Val knew nothing of the county talk, and his moody troubled face bore no disguise that the dull wits of visitors and servants could be expected to look through.

The weather for many days past had been close and sultry, and had brought with it a feeling of depression, which affected both husband and wife. And now the time fraught with so much of desire and dread came on, and Val waited for news in the room in which Hiram Search first met him. For a time the messengers who found him waiting there, brought reassuring news enough; but in a while he was left altogether alone, staring out at the sultry noonday sky and the shadowless noonday fields. He waited a long time, and then rang the bell and asked for news. The messenger returned with an ominous face and an equivocal message; and after another anxious terrible pause of an hour, which seemed a year in its prolonged suspense, he was confronted by the doctor. 'Well?' he said. That was all. It was recorded against him afterwards, though the stern, almost savage brevity of the question meant Love on the rack.

'I may congratulate you on one side, Mr Strange,' returned the doctor; 'though on the other I am afraid there is scarcely room for hope.' Val looked at him stonily and said nothing. It was all set down against him with the rest, though his very heartstrings ached. 'Mrs Strange has implored me to allow her to see you. I am sure I need not ask you to be self-possessed, though I fear it can make little difference.'

There was a dryness in his throat and a fire in his eyes, as Val followed the doctor through the long corridor and up the stairs. A moment later, Constance reached feeble arms towards him.

'You have always loved me,' she whispered, 'in spite of the shadow that fell between us.'

'Always,' he answered huskily. 'I shall love you till I die.' He buried his piteous face in the pillow beside her, and those were the last words she heard in this world. The lax arm that lay across his neck told him the truth; but he did not move until some one entered and touched him on the shoulder. Then he arose and looked at the face before him for a minute, and walked away without a tear or a kiss or a murmur. It told against him in the common foolish tale; but in his soul lay the unutterable burden of coming hopeless years, and what ever broken gleam of light the world had held for him seemed at that moment to go out—for ever.

The doctor left the house of mourning, and was called to another case. He carried the news

with him; and before it was two hours old, Gerard Lumby heard it. He had shown grief once, and was on his guard now, and his Spartan heart carried him away alone to the rocky slope of Welbeck Head. To die loveless—the woman he had loved. If the man had loved her and been faithful to her, he could have borne to see her happy. As he thought this, and grief and hatred inextinguishable tore his heart, he sat upon a gray boulder, so still that he might have seemed a statue, in spite of the storm within. And behind him a pall as black as Death climbed up the western heaven, and blotted out the sun, and touched the zenith, and spread out and down until it draped the sky from west to east and from north to south. There was no sign of wind; but the vast sheet of cloud crept onward as if by its own volition, throwing forward great ragged feelers of the colour of red-hot copper. By-and-by this hue, as of heated metal, spread over all the doleful under-sky, and the face of the heavens was livid, as though some gigantic fury were held back there by the strong spirit of a god. Then, without further warning, before one drop of rain had fallen, or one sigh of wind had spoken to the ear, a flash of lightning fell, and close upon it came a roar so near, so sudden and so terrible, that he leaped to his feet, and whilst it lasted felt his own passions stricken deaf and dumb and blind. The rain lashed him like a whip, and the wind released, swept out of the western darkness with gusts against which he felt it difficult to stand. The lightning and the thunder seemed one, they came so close together; and the echoes of the first tremendous peal were still buffeting windily from rock to rock, when another came upon them, and smote their mockeries dead with overwhelming sound; and again the ferocious echoing laughter of the hills broke out, and again the thunder slew it, and again it rose, till the clamour seemed scarcely less of earth than heaven. And amidst all this, his passions rose from stupor, and leaped to madness, and for once in a life the forces of nature seemed strained to find voice for a human soul.

As he stood thus, resigned in unmeasured inward tempest to the storm, he saw on a sudden that he was not alone upon the headland; and in the next flash that split the gloom and held the landscape quivering whilst he might have counted three, he knew the figure of the man he hated. Val Strange was there, scarce fifty yards away, flying upwards along the broken path. Not knowing why he followed, Gerard sprang after him. It was as yet no more than evening; but the storm had cast a shadow which anticipated night, and the lightning was needed to show the way. In the deep gloom which followed every flash, he lost the flying figure; but with each succeeding flash it seemed cast out of night again, no nearer and no further than before. Strain as he would, he could not decrease the distance which separated them by a single yard. He never paused in the intensity in which every fibre of soul and body was set upon the chase, to think of a reason for his enemy's presence there. There was no thought within him apart from those the tempest spoke for him of madness and revenge. When he fell, as he did often, he felt no shock or pain. The storm gave the sole

counsel he heeded, and seemed to lift him on its wing, and yet with equal power to guide the other's footsteps.

Tempest-borne, pursuer and pursued fled upward. They were far past the Hollow, which lay below them on the right of their course, and from the first till now they had taken a precipitate road, a mere sheep-track, shunned by the feet of men. The subtle fluid showed the broad bare shoulder of the headland, and they were within three hundred yards of the sheer edge. Here for a second the hunted figure paused, and Gerard seeing this, paused also. In that second, he knew his purpose for the first time, and consciously surveyed it. Though they fell together, he would cast this villain over the precipice. He kept his eyes on the spot where he had last seen his quarry, until the lightning cast him out of the dark again, and then he saw that he was moving slowly onward. Gerard followed slowly, and they kept their distance still. And now the storm began to decrease in violence, and as he reached the summit of the Head, the pursuer saw that all along the western sea-line there was a yellow gleam of light, and that the clouds had broken there in scattered rags of purple, which trailed over a sky of tarnished gold. He saw, too, that this rift of gold was growing larger, and that in a little while the storm would cease almost as suddenly as it had fallen. Here, on the bare scalp of the headland, there was a gruesome twilight cast from the breach in the western clouds, and the lightning showed paler in it than it had done below, against the darkness of the higher skies.

He saw these things as one who did not see them, and all his thought was of the man ahead and how to stalk him. To go on at a rush might be fatal to his purpose; for he knew, from many a trial in boyhood and youth, that Val Strange was fleet of foot than he, and could out-distance and outlast him. So, with a cold deadliness of intent, as absorbing as the heat and passion of pursuit had been, he chose his ground, and crept from boulder to boulder, nearer and nearer. The rain had ceased to fall, and only now and again the lightning hung out its shuddering flame. The thunder rumbled miles and miles behind. The slower pace, the caution of the trail, and the cessation of the tempest, seemed to fit his mood anew, as completely as the wild chase and the tumult within had kept the tumult without in unison. He was within half a score of yards now from his quarry, and he crawled a little forward and coiled himself for a spring, when a wild voice broke on the late-born stillness.

'Good-bye all!' it cried. 'Good-bye to the world I did the devil's work in. Good-bye to the trusting friend I stabbed to the heart. God bless him. O Gerard, Gerard! And oh, my love, my love!' and the wild voice quavered down into sobs and murmured on brokenly. 'And the little baby four hours old. Good-bye. You won't know how your father died. They won't think the cold-hearted villain who played his friend so false, had the heart to die like this; or the heart to break as mine is broken. Constance! maybe God will be good, and let me see you happy, as you never could have been in this world.' The voice pealed out again madly, 'Good-bye—good-bye—good-bye, all!' and a staggering

step scattered the loose pebbles. Not six yards from the edge of the precipice lay a murderous figure coiled for a spring, and when the next staggering step came on, the spring was made. The suicide was caught in a grip of steel, and a voice cried out: 'Not that way, Val! Not that way!' And they were weeping wildly in each other's arms.

GAELIC PROVERBS.

'TELL me the proverbs of a people, and I will tell you what manner of people they be.' These little, pointed sayings, in which a single flash of wit strikes fire from the gathered experience of past generations, give us a wonderful insight into the interior life of a nation. Reversing Burns's lines, we seem to be endowed with the gift of seeing our neighbours as they appear to themselves. In proverbs and familiar sayings, we have pictures of household manners and customs drawn by the people themselves, in perfect simplicity and unconsciousness; we catch glimpses of the farm, the chase; or, in more cynical mood, some little failing or weakness is revealed to us with quiet humour. And all this tells us more than whole volumes of travel, about the thoughts and feelings which lead to action, and the habits which are wont to be formed under these influences.

The collection of Gaelic Proverbs edited by Sheriff Nicolson, and published by MacLachlan and Stewart, of Edinburgh, is of singular interest, inasmuch as it opens up an almost unknown field of research, and preserves the memory of a state of things now past, or rapidly passing away. Where written records are few, as is the case among the Highlanders, proverbial lore seems to gain an added value. The book is based upon a collection published in 1785, which has hitherto been the only work of the kind in existence. It was made by the Rev. Donald Macintosh, who describes himself in his will as 'a priest of the old Scots Episcopal Church, and last of the non-jurant clergy of Scotland.' The book before us is carefully edited, with notes and illustrations drawn from varied sources; and the writer has a warm appreciation of the fine points in the Celtic character. The sayings are collated with those of other nations, which adds much to the interest of the subject. We find, as we might expect, a strong family resemblance between the proverbs of all the Celtic nations. Most of the more characteristic sayings are to be found in an Irish dress; and there are also parallels from the Welsh, Manx, and Breton languages. 'The Irishman's wit is on his tongue, but the Gael is wise after the time,' is a true distinction; and it is supplemented by the Manx: 'The Manxman is never wise till the day after the fair.' But what is very curious is, that we meet with many old familiar friends, apparently quite at home in their new surroundings. For instance, the saying, 'Every man knows best where his shoe hurts him,' is said to be as old as Plutarch; and every great European nation—even the Celt with his shoes of hide, and light step on the heather—has adopted the same form in speaking of a secret trouble.

Mr Nicolson is inclined to trace back the

origin of such sayings as have equivalents in Lowland Scotch, to the days before the reign of Malcolm Canmore, when some one or other form of Gaelic was probably the language of the whole of Scotland, with the exception of the Lothians. But then the Lowland Scotch is a direct representative of the old Angles, who held the Lothians during the period referred to, and has a perfect right to the paternity of its own proverbs. Then, again, there are those sayings which have parallels in the proverbs of continental nations. Doubtless, as Mr Nicolson suggests, Scotland had no want of communication with the continent of Europe, and the old French alliance has left distinct marks in this country. Many priests also were foreigners; and some of the young chieftains may have gone to the universities of Holland or Italy for their education. Still, this explanation seems inadequate in many cases; and looking to the large amount of proverbial wisdom which is common to all the nations of Latin or Teutonic origin, one is inclined to wonder if perhaps the original sayings were popular before the great migrations of our race, just as we find a common inheritance of fairy tales whose birthplace may be traced to the far East. To take two or three instances, pretty much at random: 'Well knows the mouse that the cat's not in the house,' is found in eight other languages; 'The blind of an eye is king among the blind,' has seven equivalents; 'Moss grows not on an oft-turned stone,' is found in Greek and Latin and nine other European languages. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to decide to what source we should look for the original root; but if any one could tell us how many of these widespread proverbs are to be found in Sanscrit, or in the modern languages of India, we might have some grounds for forming a theory how they arose.

Again, the experiences of our several lives, though they may differ widely in their surroundings, are curiously alike in essentials; and it may well be that one reason for the similarity of proverbs is, that all mankind have to learn the same lessons, calling the same qualities into play, and that they find the results of their summing-up not so very different after all. Such is the following: 'There will come in a day what won't in an age.' This is common to modern Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and English. It is an entirely abstract proposition; there is no picturesqueness of allusion to catch the fancy; it is evidently drawn in each case from the deep wells of experience. In other cases, we meet with some central truth which seems to express the universal conviction of mankind, but which becomes clothed in strong local colouring, varying according to the varying circumstances of the people who give it expression. The proverb about counting one's chickens is transformed, among a race to whom the hillside was more familiar than the poultry-yard, into the caution, 'Don't skin the deer till you get it.' The Lowlanders went to the Highlands for a comparison, 'It's ill taking the breeks off the wild Highlandman,' which becomes peaceable enough in the Gaelic, 'It's ill taking horns from the hornless cow.'

In these proverbs, we are introduced to a people very much the reverse of the popular idea of the fierce and haughty Highlander of days of yore. There is much of the nobleness and generosity

of sentiment befitting a warlike race; but the people themselves are tillers of the soil, owners of flocks and herds, fishers on the sea. Poor they are, but full of patient cheerfulness, as may be seen in the saying illustrating their belief in the wise balance of things: 'In spring, when the sheep is lean, the shellfish is fat.' The numerous allusions to shellfish show how often the dwellers by the sea-shore were dependent on what they could find there. But in spite of the hardships of their every-day life, they are full of intelligence, with high conceptions of right and duty; they are close observers of nature; and many of their sayings have about them a shrewd and quaint simplicity, which has a flavour all its own.

There is a elivalry of feeling in their ideas of warfare, which is far removed from barbarism. True, there is a grim humour in the following: 'The Lowlander is the shorter from losing his head.' But many proverbs show a true sense of justice and honour, worthy of a knight of old. Here are two Ossianic sayings, both remarkable for their forbearance: 'Fingal never fought a fight without offering terms; 'Neither seek nor shun the fight.' This is a noble motto for a sword: 'Draw me not without cause, nor return me without honour.' Again: 'Honour is a tender thing; 'Honour is nobler than gold.' Many a Highland glen is deserted now where brave men used to dwell; but the old pledge, 'The clans of the Gael, shoulder to shoulder,' still wakens a hearty response from Highland regiments wherever strong arms and stout hearts are needed for the honour of Britain.

There are some interesting illustrations of elanship. 'To whom can I make my complaint and no Clanranald in Moidart?' originally said of the Clanranald who was killed at the battle of Sheriffmuir, has about it a touching wail of hopelessness. The following gives us a curious glimpse of a state of society long since passed away: 'It is not every day that Macintosh holds a court.' Macintosh of Monyvaird, Chamberlain to the Earl of Perth, held a regality court at Monyvaird; but it is commonly reported that he caused one person to be hanged each court-day, in order to make himself famous and to strike terror into the thieves, which severity occasioned the above saying. All readers of the *Fair Maid of Perth* will remember the cry, 'Another for Hector!' with which the heroic old foster-father devoted one after another of his sons to death for their chief. These words were really spoken at the battle of Inverkeithing (1652), where Hector Roy M'Lean of Duart was killed with hundreds of his clan. The attachment of foster-brothers is most marked: 'Dear is a kinsman, but the pith of the heart is a foster-brother.' Scarcely less strong is the sense of relationship: 'All the water in the sea won't wash out our kinship.' Yet, when we come to the various characteristics of the clans described by each other, they are almost always unfavourable: 'A M'Lean without boast, a M'Donald without cleverness, a Campbell without pride, are ill to find.' Again: 'M'Laine of Loch Buy, the chieftain of thieves.' The M'Gregors, however, are always mentioned with respect: 'Hills and streams and M'Alpines; but when did the M'Arthurs come?' and again: 'There never was a clown of the M'Gregors.' Some districts also come in for a share of the same bad character:

'What the Mull-man sees, he covets; what the Mull-man covets, the Coll-man steals; and what the Coll-man steals, the T'ree-man hides.'

We naturally expect to find a strong flavour of the sea derived from the Hebrides and the adjacent shores of the mainland; and the proverbs which come to us from this source are among the most racy and original of all. 'No wind ever blew that did not fill some sail,' is an improved form of the familiar, 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.' Making needless difficulties is happily described as 'Making a great ocean of a narrow strait.' For a man who piques himself on being always wiser than his neighbours, it is said: 'He knows where the whales breed.' For one who seems fated never to be in luck: 'When the herring is in the north, Red Malcolm is in the south.' Here is a brave and cheery utterance, peculiarly suggestive of the narrow seas, where the tide is a power not to be lightly set at naught: 'None ever got tide with him that did not get it against him.' Nor is the wind forgotten: 'I shall go to-morrow, said the king. You shall wait for me, said the wind.' What a world of suggestive tenderness and pathos lies in the following: 'There is hope of the man at sea, but none of the man in the church-yard!' To these may be added the following graphic little story. The small Hebridean islands of Ulva and Gometra are divided by a narrow channel, which is passable at low water. On one occasion, when the minister who had gone over to Gometra to preach—intending afterwards to return to Mull—was in the midst of his sermon, he was summarily interrupted by the beadle with the warning: 'Get on, Master John—the channel is filling!'

We turn with interest to inquire what weather folk-lore may be gathered from this new source, and we find that the testimony of the Gael does not differ greatly from that of the other dwellers in our island. This is very generally found to be true: 'Winter comes not till after New Year, nor spring till after St Patrick's Day' (March 17). The following shows the usual distrust of a too early spring, and is very gracefully expressed: 'For every song the mavis sings in February, she'll lament ere spring be over.' Another saying worth quoting is: 'A month from the first ear to the full ear, and a month from the full ear to the withered [ripened] ear.' The following excellent advice to husbandmen shows a remarkable insight into the true principles of agriculture: 'To feed the land before it get hungry, to give it rest before it grow weary, to weed it well before it get dirty—the marks of a good husbandman.' The proverb about 'far-away birds,' and Campbell's line about the enchanting effects of distance, are both paralleled in the saying: 'Blue are the hills that are far from us.' The Gael has also a proverb instinct with the breath of freedom: 'There is no smoke in the lark's house.'

Here are two curious proverbs: 'It would be something for one man, but it's a small thing for two, as Alexander the Proud said about the world.' And again: 'She is as good at spinning as the Greek woman.' The latter seems to allude to Penelope; and both are interesting (supposing they are not quite modern), as showing that the Highlanders had some knowledge of Greek tales.

This is also evidenced by the frequent occurrence of such names as Hector, Æneas, and Alexander. We have never seen any satisfactory explanation of this.

As specimens of the quiet yet keen humour in which these proverbs abound, take the following: 'The cock was very bountiful with the horse's corn;' 'Tis the less for that, the less for that, as the wren said when he sipped a billful out of the sea.' But even as he smiles, the Gael knows that inevitable Fate lies in wait for him; and the consciousness of this is seldom long absent from him. 'One must go where his grave awaits him,' for 'No man can avoid the spot where birth or death is his lot.' And, 'For whom ill is fated, him it strikes.' But in a nobler mood, we have: 'A man's will is his kingdom;' and, 'A bad man makes his own destiny;' for 'Short-lived is all rule but the rule of God.' And to sum up all, let us quote this beautiful and profound saying: 'Not less in God's sight is the end of the day than the beginning.'

The time will come—and under the influence of universal travel and School Boards it is approaching rapidly—when Gaelic will cease to be a spoken language, and will share the fate of its sisters, the Manx and Cornish. Yet it will always have an interest for antiquaries and philologists; and such collections of its proverbial folk-lore as this before us help to save for the coming generations what would otherwise be probably for ever lost.

THE STORY OF INEZ.

'Easy stages each day up the coast-line of California. Slowly over the steep hills which lay in rank like breakers rolling on the shore; down the other side at a helter-skelter gallop; breakfasting in lonely fishermen's huts, with the sweet surf-music coming to us with the sun through the open door and windows, and dining at rude wayside stations and homelike farmhouses. This was our daily programme; a very pleasant one to carry out.

'Yet the balmy breezes, bringing sometimes spicy perfumes from the pine-clad slopes of the coast-range mountains, and again blowing dreamily from the south-west, failed to call to the cheeks of our sister the bloom that had been there. We idolised our sister, and we do yet, and always shall; and we shall always do everything—in or out of our paths—which will aid in the restoration of her health and happiness.

'The cause, you ask?

'We say little of that among ourselves, and we say less outside; but we clench our fists and tap our revolver-handles meaningly when there seems a resemblance in the faces of those we meet occasionally, to a villain who in designedly blasting the heart's hope of our sister, has made us his lifelong enemies. Our ancestors gave us, among other traits—some good, some bad—a vindictiveness of spirit that is as tenacious as life itself. They could not help it; neither can we. They came over with Cortez, and at the close of their

glorious conquering, settled in the Californian peninsula; where are indeed to this day the original estates in the possession of lineal descendants. Yes! a Spanish American can forgive, though it be against the grain; but he can never forget. In this matter we can neither forgive nor forget the rascally adventurer who has cast a black shadow over our peaceful household.

'In the autumn there came to the hacienda a handsome young English naval officer—on sick-leave, so he said—to whom with ready hospitality we offered the shelter of our roof.

'Frolicsome, mirthful, and an accomplished musician, he speedily gained entrance to our simple ways and simple hearts, and was treated as one of ourselves. We did not know then how happy we were; we know now by the contrast. He was soon conspicuous in the vintage festivals, treading the luscious, purple grapes in the great tubs, side by side with the girls of the valley (a privilege they denied my brother José and myself), and always the leader in the gay dances that succeeded. Yet we did not grow jealous—we are only jealous of those we mistrust. We boys of the peacefully happy Sonorada valley still basked in the sweet smiles of the señoritas, though we knew that their sweetest smiles and their sweetest words were reserved for the stranger—our friend.

'None of our companions had gained the love of Inez. They dared not speak to her of that, though a score of them had aching hearts and were sinking into chronic melancholy. They would bring in the skins of the grizzly bear and the 'mountain lion' as proofs of their valour, without exciting in her breast even a temporary admiration for themselves or their achievements. She would only say: "What a pity to kill those poor, harmless beasts!" Then the despairing gallant would mount his waiting mustang and rush madly away. She notably differed from her own flesh and blood. Long years ago, there had been a wreck, and we had saved from it a large collection of English books. As soon as she learned to speak and read in your tongue, she commenced poring over these mysterious attractions. They were 'mysterious' to us, because we could not understand why there could be any better amusement than frolicsome horse-back rides over the vine-clad hills and dales of the country around, mirthful dances at the harvest-feast, and rollicking trips in white-winged yachts.

'Roger Ayrtoun—that was his name—quickly discovered the intimate acquaintance Inez had with the English language and the authors of his motherland, and we were more than ever mystified at the conspicuous concord there was in their views. We soon learned that she was made happy by Roger's presence, and when he spoke of leaving, we endeavoured to dissuade him; for was it not our only object to contribute to her happiness? He was not behind in showing a lively pleasure in being with her; and their chats were of the merriest sort imaginable, when they sat on the wide veranda fronting the bay, looking out on the brown sails of the fishing-boats. Could he have been thinking of her, or of a lady-love far away,

when he sang blithely after leaving her side one night:

O thou moon that shinest,
Argent clear above,
All night long enlighten,
My sweet lady-love!

Might we not induce him to stay with us in the valley, if her happiness depended on it? We owned plenty of fine land, and if he married Inez, we would give him all he needed; besides, her ample dowry. We had no chance to ascertain this, for there came by a special messenger from San Francisco a summons to rejoin his ship immediately; and with a quiet but seemingly sincere farewell, he departed, promising to get an extension of leave and come back at once. And then the light faded out of her eyes, and there was but a sad smile when we spoke of Roger. Months flew quickly, and no tidings came from him whom we now characterised as a base, heartless villain—the thief of a precious affection. On going to Frisco, I found his ship had sailed for the China station, and I had to come back to the rancho with the tale. She said little—“Oh, Pedro!” and then after a while: “Can it be that he was only trifling with me?” There was no light left in her eyes then, and there were no smiles. She seemed to sink under the weight of her trouble; brain-fever set in, and her frail spirit battled long for mere life. When convalescence came, after weeks of anxious watching and nursing, we came here in pursuance of our physician's orders; and this then is our reason for apparently idling our time away here.

Told in a mixture of Spanish and English, which I liberally translate, and in musically passionate tones, accompanied with the fiery gesticulation peculiar to his race, Pedro's tale impressed us considerably. How fondly he would stroke his heavy moustache at the memory of the bright-eyed valley señoritas, and what a cold, deadly glitter in his eyes at the mention of the lieutenant. Though the departure of their ancestors from sunny Spain dated back three or four centuries, these boys gave unmistakable evidence of the source of the hot blood with which their veins were filled.

“Were I an insurance man,” whispered my companion, who had been critically scanning Pedro's lithe, sinewy limbs—“were I an insurance man, I would ask a premium of at least nine-tenths of the whole amount of insurance in assuring that lieutenant's life against casualties;” and I unhesitatingly acquiesced.

Notwithstanding the marks of deep suffering on the sister's face, there was unmistakable evidence of unsullied beauty, and the trio speedily possessed our confidence and sympathy. We, too, were recuperating in the little seaport town.

Several days after this revelation to us, through Pedro, of the origin of her sickness, we were informed that he was to start for the city—San Francisco—and judging from his grim manner the object of the trip, we finally discovered that the lieutenant's ship was expected to arrive within a day or two from her cruise. There was something ominous in his mission, and we found, almost unconsciously, ourselves fretting about it as Pedro went forth with a set determination impressed on his swarthy visage, notwithstanding his sister's feeble remonstrances.

Jerkily pacing the floor of the deserted mess-room; stooping at times to look through the port-holes, eastward over the watery expanse; uttering impatient words and exhibiting various outward signs of discomposure and anxiety—this is the frame of mind possessing Lieutenant Ayrton as we examine his well-made form and rather intellectual countenance. His brother-officers having finished dinner, have gone on deck, and he has driven out the cabin-boy, who would clear away the debris, so as to get a chance to have a bit of soliloquy. He has been triumphantly successful in his endeavours, and save the appearance around the door's edge, at very long intervals, of the dish-wiping youngster's head, he is not reminded of the existence, by sight, anyway, of any of his fellow-mortals.

“I should have sent my letter to Inez by a special messenger, and not trusted to the dilatory and unsafe mail,” he says.

“What if it has never reached her! Still, it must have. To-morrow we reach Frisco, and the very next stage will carry me to Sonorad.”

Again he breaks out: “Confound it! Why did we not cruise near some port from whence I might have sent information of my whereabouts! Always that odious junk-chasing, with no loot, no prize-money—nothing. One thing I have determined to do; it is this: Inez will marry me, and I'll settle in the valley and live the contented life of a ranchero. I can buy a small rancho, and we will be happy—so happy. After a while we shall travel about. There can be good achieved there in many ways, and it is far better to spend my life doing it than making miserable mathematical calculations and studying the laws of winds and tides.” The sound of the bell beating the hour summons his wandering mind to obvious realities. “Two bells, sir!” calls out a gruff, hearty voice, adding, “land in sight!” and Lieutenant Ayrton slowly mounts the staircase and surveys the dim blue outline of the distant shore.

How unconscious he is of the peculiar reception awaiting him; where he anticipates kisses and the warm handshaking of friends, he will find the sadness of a broken heart and the threatening muzzles of revolvers in the grasp of angry men. And now he is walking the upper-deck of the beautiful ship, and he is looking up at the stars, thinking of the pleasant events of the morrow. And he is revelling in the pure beauty of the stars; and can we doubt that he thinks them the counterpart of the light that has shone and will shine in her eyes when, clasping her in his loving arms, he kisses her anew?

A schooner dashing southward over boisterous, white-capped waves; all her available canvas set, and still they are constantly hoisting sail after sail, plainly of improvised and novel patterns, until the masts bend with their burdens. A bright sun overhead, a stiff breeze; still they are not content. Why is it? Why is it also that the skipper is chuckling over several broad gold pieces he has had lately added to his not over-profuse stock—earnests of more to follow? What can be the object in racing so determinedly to the south?

There is no cargo, and there are but three passengers—myself, José, and my ‘companion.’

Let me explain. Only this morning, to our amazement, José told us Inez had received a letter from her recreant lover, and we, as their only friends in the village, were invited to be present at the deliberations. The missive had been written in San Francisco, dated 1st October, bore the city and Sonorada post-marks, and was accompanied by a note from the valley postmaster, saying that it had been found in his office that day, buried in some rubbish underneath a counter. We did not read the other letter, but we knew from the changed countenances of brother and sister, that the cloud had lifted, that there surely had been a revelation. All the blame that had been attached to the lieutenant was to be taken back, and an entire exculpation given him. In her face might be read the presence of anxious hope—a hope misty with dreadful apprehensions. Had not her brother Pedro gone to punish the seeming destroyer of her happiness? And might not the revenge be accomplished before the present truth was communicated? We decided speedily the course to pursue, chartered a swift-sailing schooner, and with a favouring breeze were being rapidly carried on our errand.

With the close of the long day we descried the familiar landmarks denoting our nearness to the Golden Gate, and as the last token of the sun's glory reflected from the clouds away out over the sea faded, we made the famous portal—through which have passed the stoutest hearts eager with expectation—entered this time on a merciful message, to prevent, if possible, the spilling of innocent blood. Rounding slowly to the entrance, our keen-eyed captain, after examining the shipping in the harbour, suddenly called us to him, saying: 'The Britisher has arrived!'

Sure enough too; and the huge vessel presented a defiant, somewhat menacing appearance as the schooner glided past to the anchorage. We were gravely apprehensive now; we became still more alarmed and excited when the customs-officer said a boat had just landed with Lieutenant Ayrkoun and luggage—but thirty minutes since! 'Did the officer know where the lieutenant intended to stop?' 'Yes; they had said the B—Hotel.'

How we rushed through the streets to that hotel; how we collared Pedro as he stood with cocked revolver levelled at the lieutenant, and threw up his arm; how the shot tore harmlessly through the frescoed ceiling; and how happy we four were! The balance of the night has passed into the history of our lives, where it shall always be vividly present. It was a fortunate accomplishment of our design, favoured by luck.

To finish the tale of the suffering which came about through the detention of a mere letter. We sailed merrily northwards under sunny skies the next day, and the happiness on her face when folded in her lover's arms, did my old heart good.

The lieutenant, giving up 'rudder-wrestling,' did settle down to valley life; and hearing from him some few weeks since, I was rejoiced to find him in possession of two beautiful youngsters and the loving help of a true, womanly heart. He represents the Sonorada district in the legislature, and is doing much to regenerate the valley; his active and forcible

mind acting beneficially on the dozy, indolent neighbouring rancheros; and I hear a whisper in the press that the governorship of the State is proposed in his behalf.

THE CHRISTMAS LETTER MISSION.

AMONGST the numerous excellent charities of which this country has just reason to boast, there is none, probably, whose work is more extensive than that operating under the title of the Christmas Letter Mission, notwithstanding the fact that it is so quietly and unobtrusively carried on that possibly many of the readers of this *Journal* may be unaware of its existence. The primary object of this institution is to afford to each of the patients in the numerous hospitals, infirmaries, and the like, which abound throughout the land the pleasure of receiving on Christmas morning a suitable letter, conveying the message of the season, together with a bright Christmas card. That such a surprise, small though the gift may seem, and the sense of being remembered at this cheerful season, should constitute for the often sad and always suffering patients a greeting which it is well worth some pains and thought to bestow, cannot for a moment be doubted; and as it is extremely desirable that the fact of such work being carried on in our midst should be known as widely as possible, we venture to offer a few remarks upon the subject.

Like many other great and successful undertakings, the Christmas Letter Mission sprang from the very smallest beginnings, the idea itself originating in the sick-chamber of a lady at Brighton. Surrounded by and experiencing the many friendly tokens and ministries which love prompts at such a time, the mind of this kind-hearted lady seems to have wandered to the Homes and Hospitals where fellow-creatures also lay ill and suffering, but without the comfort or solace of these little tokens of affection that she herself enjoyed. When in health, she was accustomed to visit such institutions in her own locality, hence these reflections were probably more strongly forced upon her mind; and it was during a night of wakefulness that the bright idea of a letter to each suddenly occurred to her. This was the germ which has since developed into a gigantic Mission, distributing over three hundred thousand letters of friendship and good cheer on Christmas morning, not taking into account the numerous missives that are sent to the colonies and to foreign countries.

No time was lost in maturing and carrying out the idea; and—we are told—one wet and stormy night, just eleven years ago, a little company was gathered round the dining-room table of a Brighton clergyman—the late well-known Rev. Edward B. Elliott of St Mark's—to help in the first and experimental trial of the plan, each member being bound to secrecy. Some hundreds of Christmas cards, printed letters, and envelopes, were laid in piles on the table, and the workers, five in number, methodically set themselves to their task: No. 1 folding; No. 2 placing in envelopes; No. 3 inclosing cards; No. 4 sealing; and No. 5 tying up in parcels of twenty. These letters were destined for the

Sussex County and other Hospitals located in the neighbourhood of Brighton; and the distribution took place on the evening of the 23d December 1871, which was the working Christmas eve that year, as the 25th fell on a Monday. The packets of letters were handed over to the head-nurses of the respective wards in the hospitals visited, after the permission of the chaplains had been duly obtained, with directions to leave one on the pillow of each patient, so that it might there be found on awaking on Christmas morning. The nurses, without exception, entered with interest and pleasure into the plan; and great were the surprise and delight, it is recorded, when Christmas day arrived and each patient found waiting on the pillow a letter with the superscription, 'A Christmas Letter for you.'

This first attempt proved highly successful, and spread as it was carried on from year to year. With the increase of its dimensions, however, the Mission naturally began to feel the want of a central organisation; while the secret method of its operations produced this undesirable result, namely, that while numerous hospitals and infirmaries were over-supplied with letters and cards, many others both in town and country remained uncared for. The importance and indeed necessity of a properly regulated system at length, in 1877, so forced themselves upon the minds of the main workers, that it was actually attempted in the Christmas season of that year, and was attended with great success. Since that date, a complete system has been established throughout the country for carrying on the Christmas Letter Mission work, the staff consisting of one chief Central Secretary, resident in London, for the whole country; and a Central Secretary each for Scotland, Ireland, North Wales, South Wales, Australia, and the Continent of Europe; while every county in England and Wales, each London Postal District, and, as a general rule, each of the large towns, has an effective Secretary of its own. Each of these officials has specified duties to perform, so that the whole system is carried on now with clock-work regularity; for, as we are told, it is absolutely necessary that an organisation of this character should be administered with almost military precision. Every Secretary has a roll of regular workers; and from each county, a return, showing the state of the work, has annually to be forwarded to the chief Central Secretary, who is thereby enabled to ascertain at a glance the particulars of every individual distribution in the kingdom. Schedules, printed and ruled for the purpose, so as to show the name of each hospital and infirmary at which letters were distributed, the name and address of the distributor, and the number of patients to whom the letters were delivered, divided into adults, children, nurses, and servants, with a column for such remarks as may appear necessary, are sent to each town where there is a Secretary, to be filled up and returned to the county Secretary, who is thus enabled to compile the return required at headquarters.

Such is the machinery by means of which the three hundred thousand friendly letters and cards of Christmas greeting are now annually distributed; and—although of course on a smaller scale—it is not at all unlike the vast

system required for the decennial numbering of the people.

One of the first duties of each worker in the Christmas Letter Mission is to obtain the full consent of the chaplain or other authorities of the institution visited; and it is this rule—to which every worker is pledged—that forms the backbone of strength in the work. The result has been the warm and generous support of chaplains and 'Boards' throughout the kingdom.

So successful is the work of the Christmas Letter Mission at the present time, that although hospitals and infirmaries were originally alone contemplated as the objects of this charity, urgent requests are now received from all parts for suitable letters not only for other institutions, such as jails, refuges, workhouses, schools, and such like, but also for individual distribution. Not only, too, is the Christmas Letter Mission's work so extensive in this country, but so far distant as in India, large numbers of these letters and cards, which have been forwarded from here, are also issued; while others, translated into Swedish, German, French, and Italian, are distributed in their respective countries.

In thus indicating the main features of this admirable Mission, it is only right to state that the object underlying the work is not mere temporary amusement, nor is the motive solely to create a Christmas surprise. The work was begun with higher motives, and with such it is still carried on; and, as we may therefore suppose, the great *raison d'être* of the Mission is, in the first place, to do an act of kindness; and in the second, to awaken in the recipients some tender thoughts of the past, or some brighter hopes for the future, on a day which is intended to be one of the happiest in the year. The letters themselves, from what we have seen, are written in a bright and cheerful spirit, each being illustrated with an engraving; and many of them are in verse, especially those for children, embodying in the form of a slight but interesting story the truths desired to be inculcated.

If, as regards the children, the distribution of toys at this season could be incorporated with the present work of the Mission, a vast additional amount of happiness would be created amongst thousands of little ones lying sick and ill in the infirmaries and hospitals. No one truly fond of children can fail to know the appreciation in which toys are held by them at all times, but more particularly when recovering from illness. To a poor child on the bed of illness, even one discarded toy of a richer child would afford a delight not to be conceived or realised by any one whose childhood has been left in the long past. With the machinery possessed by the Christmas Letter Mission, what infinite happiness and amusement might be carried into the hearts of such little ones by the collection and distribution of the old and thrown-away toys of the more fortunately circumstanced children! Nor need the adults be forgotten. Old books of light, entertaining, and healthy literature, periodicals, illustrated papers, and indeed any slight publication likely to interest and benefit the reader, could also through this means be distributed, to lighten and relieve the weary hours of sickness. In this latter field, it is fair to mention that much has already been

done in London by Dr Dawson W. Turner; but although the work he has thus accomplished is really wonderful, it is little to what might be performed through the agency of so powerful and extensive an organisation as that of which we are writing.

Before drawing this paper to a close, there is one important point which must certainly not be omitted, and it is contained in the question: 'Is the work of the Christmas Letter Mission appreciated by those for whom it is undertaken?' If the present and past success, the magnitude and extent of the work, are not a sufficient answer, let it then be given straight from the lips of those most concerned. The Reports of the various Secretaries and workers connected with this vast benevolent system are invariably accompanied with remarks attesting the appreciation on the part of the recipients of the letters and Christmas cards distributed; while numbers are supplemented by actual instances and illustrations of these acknowledgments, and from these we cannot do better than select one or two examples. 'We found,' says one Report, 'one woman very ill and poor and helpless, yet her face plainly told of a peace and joy not of this world; and on my inquiring as to her hopes beyond this life, she said: "Well, ma'am, I can't tell you *plain*, but them's my sentiments;" and she handed us a Christmas Letter! "It is them blessed words has done me so much good. Why, when I was all alone in the B— Workhouse Infirmary, feeling as if no one knew or cared for me, I found this letter on my pillow. I started! It might be to tell me my husband had died in the Asylum, poor fellow. But no! There was just this letter and a beautiful card; and I began to read it. And little by little the others woke up, and there *was* such a to-do! "You got a letter, Mrs H—; I wish I had one!" And then one and another found a letter and a card; and they were so pleased; and it seemed a message from heaven—it did. And I thought the one as wrote it must have knowed what it was to feel lonely, and ill, and tired. I do wish the lady as sent them could know how pleased we all were!"

In another case, the old people, not content with sending their thanks through the matron of the infirmary where they were patients, selected from among themselves a scribe, and requested the inclosure of an epistle to the Branch Secretary. The letter, which is a curiosity in itself, ran thus:

IN FERMERY.

DEAR MADDAM i have taken the liberty of righting to you for your crissmass presint for wee are 8 of us in our in fermery and wee are all hartley thankfull . . . for wee are all old peepell from 66 up to 95 years of age plase to excuse me for my bad righting. From yours truly
T— G—

The matron of a city hospital affords the following testimony: 'In my experience, Christmas Day in hospital usually commences with a certain amount of sadness, almost all wishing they were at home with their friends; and their conversation amongst themselves is usually how they enjoyed last Christmas Day, ending in, with rather a sad voice: "But I was well then!" This year was

certainly not so. They were each talking of their cards, and looking bright and happy; and as several of them remarked: "It is so kind of the people outside to think of us!"' The chaplain of one of our largest London hospitals also remarks in the course of a long letter on the subject: 'I am glad to be able to say that all—patients, nurses and servants—thoroughly appreciated them' (the letters and cards).

The testimony of the appreciation of the Christmas letters thus distributed is everywhere the same. It may be of interest to add that in Ireland, the success of the Christmas Letter Mission work is most encouraging; and chaplains, lady-superintendents, and matrons there with one accord acknowledge the glad surprise given to their patients by the receipt of the Christmas missives, reminding them, as it does, of creature-sympathy. Last season, no fewer than five thousand four hundred and fifty letters were issued in Ireland, and the circulation is expected to be greatly extended this year.

After reading the foregoing, many of our readers may be disposed to take a friendly and active interest in the Christmas Letter Mission. It is almost unnecessary to say that so vast a system cannot be carried on without money, and we understand that funds are now very much needed. Those, therefore, who would help the Mission in this respect should send their subscriptions to Miss Steele Elliott, the Treasurer and General Organiser, 66 Mildmay Park, London, N. Those, however, who desire to engage personally and actively in the good work, are requested to address their communications or inquiries on the subject to Miss Strong, the Central Secretary, 67 Ladbroke Grove, Notting Hill, London, W.

IMPROMPTUS.

THE impromptu is a form of pleasantry in which the wits and humorists of all ages have more or less indulged. The Greeks and Romans were adepts in this species of humour, and they sometimes enlivened their domestic entertainments by contests in impromptu and other verse-making. On these occasions trifling prizes were given to the most skilful, and many notices of these wit-combats have been handed down to us in classical literature. Impromptu verse-making has also formed one of the principal amusements of certain modern literary societies. One of these associations, to which the well-known writer, poet, and Oriental scholar, William Tennant, belonged, existed at one time at Anstruther, in Scotland, under the title of the 'Muso-manik Society.' At its ordinary meetings, rhymes were given to every member present, which he was required to fill up immediately, on the spur of the moment. On one occasion 'pen, scuffle, men, ruffle,' were given. In a few minutes, lines were produced by the whole party, one act being as follows:

One would suppose a silly pen
A shabby weapon in a scuffle;
But yet the pen of critic men,
A very hero's soul would ruffle.

On another occasion the very uncouth rhymes,

'bubble, jig, stubble, whirligig,' were utilised thus :

What is life?—A smoko, a bubble;
In this gay world, a foolish jig;
A joyless field of barren stubble;
And what is man?—A whirligig.

Queen Elizabeth has been credited with an impromptu which, if not the composition of Her Majesty, smacks very much of that bluntness which she is said to have inherited from her father. It is stated that when the Queen was passing through Coventry on one occasion, the Mayor and Corporation persistently stood in the way to present a loyal address, which ran somewhat in this fashion :

We men of Coventree
Are very glad to see
Your gracious Majesty.
Good Lord, how fair ye be !

To which Her Majesty at once replied :

Her gracious Majesty
Is very wroth to see
Ye men of Coventree.
Good Lord, what fools ye be !

Political events have, of course, given rise to innumerable impromptus. Thus, in 1765, one Williams, a bookseller, published the celebrated *North Briton* of Wilkes, and for so doing was condemned to stand in the pillory in Palace Yard for one hour on the first of March. A collection of two hundred pounds was made for Williams on the spot, and one of the spectators wrote on the pillory-scaffold the impromptu :

Martyrs of old for truth thus bravely stood,
Laid down their lives, and shed their dearest blood ;
No scandal then to suffer in her cause,
And nobly stem the rigour of the laws :
Pulpit and desk may equally go down,
A pillory's now more sacred than a [crown].

The notorious election for Westminster of 1784 gave rise to a number of clever impromptus. The return of Charles Fox on this occasion was due in a great measure to the exertions of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, who with her sister, Lady Duncannon, visited the humblest of the electors. On one occasion the Duchess is said to have given a butcher a kiss in order to gain his vote, which drew forth the following :

Condemn not, prudes, fair Devon's plan,
In giving Steel a kiss ;
In such a cause, for such a man
She could not do amiss.

This incident was caricatured in innumerable pictures, and one individual wrote :

Arrayed in matchless beauty, Devon's fair
In Fox's favour takes a zealous part ;
But oh ! where'er the pilferer comes, beware,
She supplicates a vote, and steals a heart !

The business of the Senate has naturally given rise in many instances to amusing impromptus. Thus Lord Sandon replying in the House of Commons to a question, announced that forty-six cattle had died in Lincolnshire of drinking water. An ardent teetotaler—a member of the House, distinguished equally for his humour and his

zeal for temperance legislation—promptly penned the following :

When forty-six cattle have perished by water,
To alter our system it's time to begin ;
Let's feed them in future on beer or on porter,
On rum, or on brandy, on whisky or gin.
Like beasts let them drink without stoppage or pause,
Refilling their buckets again and again ;
Till at last we are able to say with just cause—
'These beasts are as wise and as worthy as men.'
Then hail to the system promoted by Sandon !
Henceforward our life will more pleasantly glide,
When our flocks and our herds shall all water abandon,
And our cattle lie peacefully drunk at our side.

This species of wit is not, however, confined to the British Senate ; for at a sitting of the American House of Representatives, not many years since, one of the members—Mr Horr—delivered himself of the following impromptu epitaph on Mr S. Cox, another member :

Beneath this slab lies the great Sam Cox,
Who was wise as an owl and brave as an ox :
Think it not strange his turning to dust,
For he swelled and he swelled till he finally bust.
Just where he has gone, or just how he fares,
Nobody knows and nobody cares ;
But whosoever he is, be ho angel or elf,
Be sure, dear reader, he's puffing himself.

Some very witty impromptus have at times been made by the limbs of the law. Joseph Jekyll, for instance, the greatest legal wit of the reign of George III., bored with the long-winded speech of a prosy serjeant, wrote on a slip of paper, which was in due course passed along the barristers' benches of the court where he sat :

The serjeants are a grateful race,
Their dress and language show it ;
Their purple garments come from Tyre,
Their arguments go to it.

On another occasion, when a well-known counsel was doing his best in cross-examination to get an acknowledgment from an elderly unmarried lady that certain money in dispute had been tendered, Jekyll threw him the couplet :

Garrow, forbear ; that tough old jado
Will never prove a tender maid.

So again, when Lord Chancellor Eldon and Sir Arthur Pigott each stood out in court for his own pronunciation of the word *lean*—Eldon pronouncing it like *lion*, and Pigott like *lean*—Jekyll, alluding to the parsimonious arrangements of the Chancellor's kitchen, perpetrated the following impromptu :

Sir Arthur, Sir Arthur, 'why, what do you mean,
By saying the Chancellor's *lion* is *lean* ?
D'ye think that his kitchen's so bad as all that,
That nothing within it can ever get fat ?

Sir George Rose, another great lawyer, was noted for the excellence of his witticisms in court and elsewhere. The following double impromptu took place at a dinner-table between Sir George and James Smith, one of the authors of the celebrated *Rejected Addresses*, in allusion to Craven Street, Strand, where Smith resided. Smith wrote :

At the top of my street the attorneys abound,
And down at the bottom the barges are found.
Fly, Honesty, fly, to some safer retreat ;
For there's craft in the river, and craft in the street.

Sir George replied :

Why should Honesty fly to some safer retreat,
From attorneys and barges, od rot 'em?
For the lawyers are just at the top of the street,
And the barges are just at the bottom.

Lord Thomas Erskine also was celebrated in his day for his wit, and was the author of many capital impromptus. An amusing specimen was that made on his hearing that a certain house in Red Lion Square, once occupied by a distinguished counsel, had been taken by an ironsmith :

This house, where once a lawyer dwelt,
Is now a smith's—Alas !
How rapidly the Iron Age
Succeeds the Age of Brass.

The lawyers, however, have not always had the best of the argument, for on a certain occasion an attorney thinking to make a joke at the expense of a journalist, sent him the following lines :

I slept in an editor's bed last night,
When no other chanced to be nigh ;
How I thought, as I tumbled the editor's bed,
How easily editors lie !

The journalist was equal to the occasion, and immediately penning the following lines, sent them to the lawyer :

If the lawyer slept in the editor's bed,
When no lawyer chanced to be nigh ;
And though he has written, and naively said,
How easily editors lie ;
He must then admit, as he lay on that bed
And slept to his heart's desire,
Whate'er he may say of the editor's bed,
'Twas the lawyer himself was the liar.

Our literary celebrities have contributed their full share to this amusing kind of pleasantry, and even the sedate Dr Johnson, in his lighter moments, was the author of a number of these poetical trifles, one of the best being that written to Mrs Thrale on that lady's completing her thirty-fifth year :

Off in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five ;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five ;
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to drive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stoek and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five ;
For, howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five ;
He that ever hopes to thrive,
Must begin by thirty-five ;
And all who wisely wish to wive
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

Mr Clarke, in his *Autobiographical Recollections of the Medical Profession*, tells a pleasant anecdote of Cowper in which an impromptu rendering of a verse of *John Gilpin* forms the point of the story. Mr Wilson, a hairdresser, was in the habit of resorting to Cowper's house to shave the poet, who on these occasions was generally silent. One day Wilson was shaving away in silence, when it was broken by the following circumstance. Cowper was that day to dine with Lady Austen at Clifton. Wilson had left home to be punctual

to his engagement, and had told his man to bring Mr Cowper's best wig after him—the wig having been specially dressed for the occasion. When Wilson had finished, Cowper suddenly exclaimed : 'Oh, Mr Wilson, my wig !' Wilson, who was a wit, immediately quoted in answer, from the poet's well-known poem :

I came before your wig was done ;
But if I well forebode,
It certainly will soon be here,
It is upon the road.

'Very well applied, indeed, Mr Wilson,' quoth the poet.

Byron has left us several impromptus, one of the most amusing being written in the travellers' book at Orehomenus, in Greece, in reply to the following lines, written in the book by another traveller :

Fair Albion, smiling, sees her son depart,
To trace the birth and nursery of art ;
Noble his object, glorious is his aim ;
He comes to Athens, and he writes his name.

Beneath this verse Byron wrote :

The modest bard, like many a bard unknown,
Rhymes on our names, but wisely hides his own ;
But yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse,
His name would bring more credit than his verse.

Here is a story of Thackeray and Albert Smith. The latter once wrote in the album of a young lady who was sojourning in Switzerland the following feeble impromptu :

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains—
They crowned him long ago ;
But *who* they got to put it on,
Nobody seems to know.

Thackeray, being asked by the same lady to contribute to her collection, examined the contents of her book, and coming across the above lines of Albert Smith's, at once penned the following :

I know that Albert wrote in hurry ;
To criticise I scarce presume ;
But yet methinks that Lindley Murray,
Instead of *who*, had written *whom*.

Theodore Hook, the wittiest man of his day, was a most prolific impromptuist. No matter what the occasion or the subject, Hook could improvise verses—and witty ones too—upon it. On one occasion as Hook and Mathews the actor were rowing up the river, they saw a notice-board on a lawn forbidding any one to land there. Hook at once invented a scheme. He and Mathews landed, with fishing-rods and lines. Hook acted the land-surveyor, Mathews the clerk. They began to measure with the fishing-rods as measuring and levelling staffs, and the fishing-lines as yard and rood measures. Presently the owner appeared, and began to soundly rate the interlopers ; but Hook quietly stated that a canal was to be cut directly across the lawn, and that measurements were necessary for the work. The owner of the lawn ultimately asked them in to talk the matter over ; a good dinner and capital wines were ready ; over which the gentleman tried to persuade the surveyor that another line for the canal might be easily obtained without touching his lawn. Hook at length revealed the hoax, and narrated the

whole transaction in impromptu verse, the narrative winding up with :

And we greatly approve of your fare;
Your cellar's as prime as your cook;
And this clerk here is Mathews the player;
And my name, sir, is—Theodore Hook.

On another occasion, Hook was singing an extempore comic song at the house of a friend, when the servant entered and said : 'Please, sir, here's Mr Winter, the collector of taxes.' Hook immediately sung :

Here comes Mr Winter, collector of taxes;
I'd advise you to pay him whatever he axes.
Excuses won't do; he stands no sort of flummery;
Though Winter's his name, his process is summary.

Many other clever impromptus might be cited, but that which has just been given reminds us that we must not further tax the patience of our readers.

CHLORAL.

THE age we live in is remarkable for the progress that has been made in scientific discovery, and in this progress medical research has benefited equally with other branches of science. Even in the small way of household remedies, we are thankful for an apparent reform. The bitter potions of senna and rhubarb are no longer common, and now we have doses for childhood served up in the shape of elegant and toothsome comfits. In the higher walks of medical reform, scientific research has done much to alleviate human suffering; increased attention has been paid to the proper action of medicines, and this to a great extent has been due to exact physiological research.

One example of the results which have been derived from physiological research is to be found in the discovery of the hypnotic or soporific properties of chloral by Dr Liebreich of Berlin—a discovery entirely due to a very simple conjunction of chemical and physiological facts, and a series of experiments based thereon. The simplicity of the discovery will be clearly seen when we have explained what chloral is, and some of its relations to other well-known substances. The word chloral is a combination of two words, chlorine and alcohol, formed by combining the first syllable of each. It is prepared by the action of dry chlorine gas upon alcohol; and the liquid chloral which is the product of the action is distilled into a large flask constructed to receive it. The product thus obtained is not used in medicine; but when it is mixed with a certain proportion of water, it forms a crystalline compound called hydrate of chloral, and is the article commonly known as 'chloral.' When hydrate of chloral is heated with an alkali, chloroform is produced; and it was the knowledge of this fact which led Dr Liebreich to suppose that if chloral were introduced into the circulation of animals, the alkaline nature of the blood would cause slow evolution of chloroform from the chloral, and consequently sleep would be produced.

After Dr Liebreich had carefully noted the various effects produced by his new remedy upon the lower animals, he ventured to take a dose himself, which he did at different times, both subcutaneously and in a draught. By both methods he found the result to be the same—a deep dreamless sleep, lasting from six to ten hours, according to the dose taken.

The announcement of Dr Liebreich's discovery was warmly received by the medical profession, who regarded it almost as a fulfilment of the prediction which was made many years ago by Sir James Y. Simpson, that 'a drug would yet be found which would possess all the virtues of opium without its baneful effects.' Such a drug, Liebreich's chloral seemed to be; and if success were to be judged by the quantity used, Dr Liebreich must have had no cause to complain. It is a remarkable fact that such drugs as chloral invariably become popular outside the medical profession. The reason of this is not far to seek, when we think of the number of persons who suffer from insomnia, and to whom opium possesses too many apparent horrors. One would scarcely grudge the wearied brain anything which will bring it rest, for is not sleep the sovereign balm for all ills? But, unhappily, the use of medicines that induce sleep is attended with the greatest risk of abuse, for the wearied frame and the conscience-stricken or troubled mind drive their unhappy possessors to larger and larger doses of their potent soother. Such, too, is the case with chloral. There are records of many fatal cases from its use, some of which have been accidental—that is to say, in which an ordinary dose produced death; but in the great majority of deaths, large and poisonous doses have been taken.

Chloral has a direct action upon the heart and the brain, so that when either of these organs is in an abnormal condition, the dangers to be apprehended from its use are not a few. Its action differs very much from that of opium, for the victims of the latter seldom die from the immediate influence of the drug, but rather from some organic disease brought on by its use. Now, chloral accumulates in the system until such a quantity is present as will stop all organic functions; but death in these cases generally results from an interference with the heart's action, or from a sort of suspension of the nervous stimuli—the nature of the death thus being not unlike that of chronic alcoholism.

Many chloral-drinkers have been dipsomaniacs at one time or other, and have drifted from the use of alcohol to the chloral bottle, or have moderated their consumption of alcohol by the conjunction of chloral. Although chloral-drinking is not so apparent as dram-drinking, yet it has even a greater power over its victims; and as its immediate effects are not so degrading as those of alcohol, they imagine that it is not so ruinous as the latter; but it is the result of an insatiable desire, and as such, it becomes an infatigating and degrading vice. The consumption of the drug has, we are glad to note, greatly decreased during the past few years, for a knowledge of the evils of its indiscriminate use has been acquired, and a proper place in therapeutics has been assigned to it.

We hope we have said enough to show the

evil of the habit of chloral-drinking, and that it is far better to try Nature's own remedies for sleeplessness, than to resort to such dangerous remedies as those we have been considering. Sleep-inducing medicines are for the pain-troubled patient under medical treatment, not for the man or woman who is able to go about his or her daily round of duties.

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CURIOSITY.

IN the course of our experience we have seen many curiosities of literature, but none that could rival in uniqueness and originality one which was printed in Paris and entitled 'The new Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English,' by Pedro Carolino. An author of an educational work should beyond all others be thoroughly acquainted with his subject, but the wording of the title will no doubt be sufficient to give an idea of the merits of the book. The true aims and pretensions of the work can, however, only be learned from the preface, which runs as follows: 'A choice of familiar dialogues, clean of gallicisms, and despoiled phrases, it was missing yet to studious portuguese and brazilian Youth; and also to persons of other nations, that wish to know the Portuguese language. We sought all we may do, to correct that want, composing and dividing the present little work in two parts. The first includes a greatest vocabulary proper names by alphabetical order; and the second forty-three Dialogues adapted to the usual precisions of the life.- For that reason we did put, with a scrupulous exactness, a *great variety own expressions* to english and portuguese idioms; without to attach us selves (as make some others) almost at a literal translation; translation what only will be for to accustom the portuguese pupils, or foreign, to *speak very bad* any of the mentioned idioms.

'We were increasing this second edition with a phraseology, in the first part, and some familiar letters, anecdotes, *idiotisms*, proverbs, and to second a coin's index.

'The Works which we were conferring for this labour, fond use us for nothing; but those what were publishing to Portugal, or out, they were almost all composed for some foreign, or for some national little acquainted in the spirit of both languages. It was resulting from that carelessness to rest these Works fill of imperfections, and anomalies of style: in spite of the infinite typographical faults which sometimes invert the sense of the periods. It increase not to contain any of those Works the figured pronunciation of the english words, nor the prosodical accent in the portuguese; indispensable object whom wish to speak the english and portuguese languages correctly.

'We expect then, who the little book (for the care what we wrote him, and for her typographical correction) that may be worth the acceptance of the studious persons, and especially of the Youth, at which we dedicate him particularly.'

Notwithstanding the great care with which the author wrote the work, we are forced to the conclusion that it is not quite free from 'despoiled phrases.' The author candidly states that he has

introduced into his work a great variety of his own expressions, and it may not be out of place to quote a few. Thus, in the English dialogues we find such expressions as: 'This coat go to (fits) you,' 'It is a blunt man,' 'She do not tell me nothing,' 'There is it two years what my father is dead,' 'It must never to laugh of the unhappies.' After this there is hope for all, even the veriest tyros in literature, more especially when they are assured that the work from which the foregoing phrases are extracted, has gone through two editions!

Fact, we are told, is stranger than fiction; and for the future it should always be remembered when reading humorous specimens of pigeon-English, that however exaggerated these may appear, they have been excelled in a seriously written work.

NOVEMBER.

SCARCE one brief sun-ray gilds the sombre gloom
That veils the mountains; the bright summer-blue
Is but a memory; and gray and dun
The cheerless landscape, wrapped in watery mist,
Foretells the advent of grim Winter's reign!

Fast wanes the Autumn! Thick the showering leaves
Whirl brown and russet o'er the wind-swept path
In eddying circles; and the fitful gusts
Bend to their will, with a fierce wrathful wail,
The gaunt black fir-tops; all the heather-lands,
Their purple glories gone, lie sere and bare,
Scarce yielding scanty shelter in their range
To the crouched shivering grouse-troop.

Here and there,
A lingering daisy stars the homestead field
With speck of white; and in the garden-beds,
In bright array of crimson and of gold,
Gleam the ohrysanthemums: all else shows drear,
And gray, and colourless.

But soon shall fall,
On all around, the pure and spotless snow,
To shroud the buried beauties Nature wraps
Deep in their Winter sleep, till Spring again,
With her bright train of buds and blossoms fair,
Green opening leaves, and choir of tuneful birds,
Warm sunny days, balm-scented dewy nights,
Shall smiling come, and with her magic touch
Make glad with Life and Beauty all the Earth!

A. H. B.

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THE GREAT COMET OF 1882.

BY PROFESSOR PIAZZI SMYTH, ASTRONOMER-ROYAL
FOR SCOTLAND.

JUST as the greatest geniuses are those who appear from out the mass of the people, no one knows how or why—and the greatest poets, say Shakespeare and Burns, come of rustic nurture, rather than of university training—so is it of comets.

Comets indeed are now looked for, and most perseveringly as well as scientifically searched for, all over the heavens every night of the year by most able astronomers in various countries, in the southern as well as the northern hemisphere of the world, in observatories armed with the most powerful telescopes of modern times; and the learned men therein do discover by their patient labours very many comets. Not less perhaps than six or seven every year. And the exact position of these among the stars is telegraphed as soon as found from one of those comet-seeking observatories to another, so that in a few days, spite of clouds in this or that locality, sufficient observations are soon procured to allow of the mathematical computers ascertaining the shape of the 'orbit,' or path round the sun, which each comet is performing, together with the peculiar angular position of such orbit in space, and the exact date of the wanderer therein coming to its point of perihelion, or nearest approach to the sun; and that is usually the end of it all. For nearly every one of *those* comets is faint and small to an almost inconceivable degree; a mere pellet of barely luminous vapour in the largest telescope; about which only a few of the learned of mankind can pretend to feel any interest, and which a very small number even of them have seen with their own eyes.

But when a really great comet appears, with a brilliant head outshining every star, and a lengthy tail stretching half across the sky, alarming and exciting the nations the whole world round, it is almost always a sudden appearance, as unexpected by the learned as by the peasant, and

usually first seen by one of the latter class with the naked eye, and by pure accident, long before the learned men of the observatory equatorials have brought their optic tubes to bear on the stranger.

Thus there are in the heavens under the designation of one and the same short word, comets *and* comets indeed. Some so exceedingly faint, that only the most powerful object-glasses or reflectors will just show a something in the field on a very dark night; others so brilliant, that they may be seen by every one near the sun at noonday. Some so absolutely small, that without being very far off—amongst the planetary spaces—they subtend angles of only a few seconds, or less than the unassisted eye can appreciate; others again so large that for mere length in millions of miles they dwindle even our mighty sun into insignificance, and are seen from the earth under such enormous angles, even sixty and ninety degrees, that they render the telescope comparatively useless, and enable a better idea of the whole to be obtained by the simple unassisted eye.

Now the comet of which we have to speak in this article, the same which the world has been privileged to behold during these few last months, and is still beholding, is one of the latter character: one of the largest among the large comets; one of the brightest among the bright ones; and yet there is something else about it of vastly deeper import and of rarer occurrence than anything connected with mere size or brightness.

It was first seen—so far as the records go at present—on the night of September 7, or the early hours of September 8, at the Cape of Good Hope, by a worthy citizen in his villa half-way up Table Mountain. He had turned out, as is not unusual in that burning climate, for a saunter in his garden before dawn under the light of the stars; and there, over the eastern horizon, was the brilliant and already full-shining stranger. On September 11, it was seen at the Observatory of Rio de Janeiro, a mighty comet, and claimed as an imperial discovery there. And again on

September 17, a very respectable gentleman near London, spending his Sunday forenoon in telescoping the sun and its neighbourhood, stumbled on a comet close to the resplendent orb of day, conspicuous even through a dark-red glass; and he hoped to call it by his own name. But the chronological priorities we have described sternly forbid that, for each of these three supposed discoveries of 'a new comet' refers to one and the same body.

Next begin the observations of those who had been telegraphically warned by one or other of the successive discoverers that such a comet was visible. And here we must place with all honour the observations made at noonday on September 18, both at Lord Crawford's Observatory at Dunecht near Aberdeen, and by M. Thollon, at the grand new French Observatory at Nice. At both these places the observations were chiefly spectroscopic, and agreed well in their story. Now, what that wonderful instrument of modern research, the spectroscope, can say at all, it says instantly; and in this case it at once informed the observers, by a peculiar displacement of certain lines, that the comet had passed the crucial perihelion point of its orbit, and was hastening away from us again, almost as rapidly as it had, so few days before, shot down out of dark, distant space into our sun-illuminated neighbourhood. That important fact ascertained, there was leisure to consider the rest of the spectroscope's revelations: as thus—

It is now extensively known that comets shine partly by reflecting the light of the sun, and partly by their own inherent light, whether that be produced by temperature, combustion, or electrical currents. But nineteen out of every twenty comets yet spectroscopied, have shown for the material of their own proper light, nothing but the faintest, feeblest, coldest, order of shining stuff known; namely, the blue part which may be seen at the base of any little candle-flame, wax-taper, or farthing rushlight; and which shows a mere trace of a hydro-carbon gas in weakest combustion, barely raised above phosphorescence or Will-o'-the-wisp glimmer over marshy ground.

But the present great comet when similarly tested, not only showed salt, or the metalloïd 'sodium' lines burning brilliantly, but iron lines doing the same—spectroscopic lines that can only exist where iron is so intensely hot that it rises as a gas, vividly incandescent in a more fervid heat than any of our furnaces can produce. No wonder, therefore, that when to the astronomers in the Royal Observatory, at the Cape of Good Hope on September 17, the comet was for a time projected to their point of view on part of the sun's disc, it was no black body, like that of the inferior planets Venus or Mercury at their transits across the sun, but was just as bright intrinsically as any part of the solar surface itself.

All these particulars are, however, merely optical details, *physical* features, modern outcomes of chemistry rather than astronomy. But if even they show this comet to be something so remarkable amongst comets, what says proper, gravitational, mathematical, astronomy about it,

both its history in the past, and prospects in the future?

The first result obtained in that way, was—that this comet of burning iron, moving at the terrific rate of three hundred and seventy miles per second (compare that with the speed of a cannon-ball moving at the rate of only sixteen hundred feet in the same small portion of time), must, at the perihelion point of its orbit, have grazed the very surface of the sun.

Next that the direction of its motion was retrograde, or contrary to that of all the planets, and to the sun's own rotation; but that the shape of its path, and its position in space coincided remarkably with a similarly abnormally moving comet seen in 1880, and thought to be revolving then in an orbit of thirty-seven years. But that comet again had been identified as being the same that appeared in 1843; though on that occasion it was moving in an orbit of one hundred and seventy-five years' period, and was considered to be the same body that had appeared in 1668.

Usually, generally, almost universally, the period of revolution of any species of body, whether planet or comet, around the sun, is something of exceeding fixedness, or of the slowest possible alteration.

There is, indeed, such a thing as ether, or a most attenuated form of gas spread throughout otherwise empty space, and which, theoretically, ought, in course of time, if extended to millions of billions of trillions of years inconceivable, to reduce the velocities and decrease the size of the orbits of every planet and every comet revolving round the sun, until one after the other they fall into that burning mass; if, that is to say, its light and heat should have been able to keep up for any such most extraordinary duration of time. In the case of our earth's revolution, or length of its year, not the smallest portion of any such effect has been discovered by the best astronomical observations from the earliest times; but there is a certain comet, one of the smallest, faintest, lightest of them all, a mere feather in space, whose movements—after twenty revolutions of it round the sun have been observed—suggest the probability of a very small amount of shortening of its orbit. But with this grand comet of 1882, 1880, 1843, 1668, we have a galloping reduction of its period, in whole years, in place of tenths or hundredths of a second, the like of which has never been approached before in all astronomical experience, and which must inevitably bring it back to the sun in a few months only, or some time next year.

Evidently, then, this comet has experienced something much more resisting than mere ether; and the idea first arrived at and published by one of the best American astronomers, Professor Lewis Boss, of the Dudley Observatory, New York (the first savant also to identify this comet with the former appearances in 1880, 1843, and 1668) is, that it must have struck some part of the sun; has gone off wounded, as it were, crippled, weakened in its velocity, altered in its orbit, and doomed to fall a victim to greater force at the next perihelion passage. And what consequences will result from that?

No one can say positively; for such an event as a comet of any kind, but much less one of the greatest of comets, falling into the sun, has

never occurred before in the range of human observation. But the possibility of such an occurrence taking place sooner or later, did not escape the prescient genius of Sir Isaac Newton; and his remarks, as gathered from him in his ripe and perfected old age by his nephew, are still most worthy to be read for advice and instruction for the presently impending occasion. Shortly, we may state, that *some* increase of solar heat must take place, even if it were to depend alone on the conversion of the dynamical energy of the comet's movement, without allowing anything for the combustion of its material, though hydro-carbons, sodium, and iron, brought into sufficiently high temperature are very powerful burners; but we know neither what weight of these or any other matters the comet carries, nor *how* it will fall into the sun.

If the whole nucleus, or governing head, of the comet should in one grand bullet form, followed in a straight line by all the sixty millions of miles long of tail (composed, as now seems probable, of such meteoric stones as form the shooting-stars of November nights), all go into the sun at one place, and at one time, some result therefrom can hardly fail to be visible from our earth, even though it be at the enormous distance of ninety-two millions of miles.

But though the spectroscope has told us so positively that the comet carries iron, sodium, hydro-carbons (coals, if you will), it gives us no right to assume them in any quantity bearing any appreciable proportion to the vast mass of the sun already existing. And when meteoric stones fall from space upon the earth, somewhat in comet fashion, they more frequently than not break-up and separate on striking the upper regions of the earth's atmosphere, first into visible fragments, and then into invisible dust, whose particles fall so slowly, and spread so widely, that it is not known when or where they all finally reach the earth's surface.*

Similarly then we may fairly expect that this errant comet, which is already reported by two or three late observers to show symptoms of separating into two or more parts, will go on breaking-up, widely scattering its materials before it makes its next solar approach; will then be absorbed into the sun, and cease thenceforward to be an independent existence, no longer revolving as now in a distinct orbit of its own around that mighty mass of matter, force, power, light, and heat, concentrated from before all terrestrial time in our grand and beneficent sun.

P.S.—Writing in *Nature* on October 23, Major Herschel, R.E. (youngest son of the late great astronomer, Sir John Herschel), now in the south of England, describes the results of his numerous observations of the comet thus tersely, and rather quaintly:

'As a whole, the comet seems to have changed wonderfully little during the last three weeks since I first saw it. Its change of place, also, is so moderate that, at this rate, there seems no reason why we should not see it for months yet. What if it should not vanish at all!'

These rather crude speculations are indeed now rendered needless by what we have already stated

of the accurate orbit in space which the comet is really moving in. But for those who would like to be eye-observers themselves of the more apparent phenomena of the starry heavens, we may state that through the month of November the comet has been moving further and further away from the sun's place, and therefore rising earlier and earlier every night; or three-and-a-half hours before the sun at the beginning of the month, to seven-and-a-half hours at the end of it. That is so far as its distance from east and west alone is concerned; but then it is at the same time moving southward, and from being five-and-a-half degrees south of the sun's place at the beginning of the month, it will be seven degrees south of it at the end, the sun itself also moving southward at the same time. This will make observations of the comet very sensibly more difficult for all inhabitants of our high northern latitudes; but will not much interfere with the view of our countrymen in India, while it will greatly favour those who in Australia and New Zealand are far away in the southern hemisphere. Their view indeed will be limited by little but the growing faintness of the comet's light, as it recedes further and further from the heating, electrifying, illuminating sun, one hundred and twenty-seven millions of miles distant at the beginning, to one hundred and eighty-one millions of miles distant at the end of November. The comet's distance from the earth is also increasing, but not at so high a rate, by reason of the part of its own orbit in which the earth is moving at this season of the year; so that while the comet was distant from us one hundred and thirty-six millions of miles at the beginning of November, it will have increased its distance only to one hundred and forty millions at the end of the month.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLVL.—'HIRAM,' SHE SAID DEJECTEDLY, 'AREN'T YOU GOING TO KISS ME?'

THAT a girl with five thousand pounds to her fortune, should be a lady's maid any longer, was of course downright ridiculous even in fancy. Even if Constance had lived, Mary's position would have been anomalous, and to seek a new post now was out of the question. So, with her five thousand pounds at the banker's in London, she provided herself with store of raiment, and took lodgings with a highly-respectable old lady at Brierham, and waited with patience for Hiram to come and marry her. But a cheque-book is hardly what Hibernicus calls the height of good company, and she felt as lonely and as unprotected, and almost as exposed to the ills of life, as in her days of poverty.

She waited with patience, and no Hiram came; she waited with impatience, and no Hiram came; she took to tears, and still he stayed away. And so, one day in the close of August, with much trembling and fear, she took a car, and was driven to the gates of Lumby Hall. She waited there, and sent the driver with instructions to ask for Mr Search, and to

* See article on 'Cosmic Dust,' in *Journal*, Nov. 4.

tell him that Miss Martial desired to speak to him. Now, in a little country town like Brierham, 'a'budy kens a'budy,' and everybody's business is everybody else's business. Mary was an heiress and a person of note, and even the local gentlefolks took an interest in her fate, and gossiped about her over their tea-tables. It was almost universally settled that to marry a valet would be the height or depth of folly, though everybody expected that the lately-favoured lover would be pretty urgent in advancing his claims. So, when it was known that she had received no visits, and had not stirred abroad, and had not indeed received so much as a note from anybody but Mr Valentine Strange and her lawyers, it was concluded that the lover was dismissed.

The relation of this history has sometimes made the mention of large sums compulsory, and King Croesus himself could not treat millions with greater *sang-froid* than the present writer. But I am not steeled by this familiarity with vast fortunes against a sense of the manifold values of even so small a fortune as five thousand pounds. 'Imagine, then, how glorious it glowed'—this snug little shining heap of money, in the eyes of certain unattached small gentry of the borough. At an interest of five per cent, that snug little shining heap would yield an unappreciable fraction over four pounds sixteen shillings and a penny-three-farthings per week, for every week of the fifty-two in a year, the principal remaining untouched—a metallic goose which could go on laying its hebdomadal golden egg for ever. The chief butcher of the place—for not alone were the smaller gentry interested—was a rosy-faced, red-whiskered young bachelor who did a great trade, and sometimes rode to hounds, when even the swells of the meet would nod and say: 'How d'ye do, Banister?' Now he looked on that little fortune in the lump, and had visions of plate-glass in the up-stairs windows, and a new slaughter-house. The corn-chandler, who was a bachelor also, turned it over in his mind, and saw a new frontage for his High Street premises. Captain Staggers, who boasted himself a cadet of the house of Windgall—the Earl of Windgall's son, as all the world knows, is Shouldershot Castle, in the north—Captain Staggers, who had once held a commission in the county militia, and whose title stuck to him, seedy and shaky and disreputable as he was, saw, when he thought of that snug little sum, a perfect vista of barmaids serving drinks to a perfect vista of rehabilitated Captain Staggerses. Mr Quill, the lately-imported Irish solicitor, saw a larger house; and his mother, Mrs Croke, a second time widowed, had a beatific vision of new window curtains and an Axminster carpet.

Little Mary, unwitting of these fancies, sat in the car, drawn a little off the road in the shade, and waited for Hiram Search. The driver, though he was a discreet man, and by not so much as a wink betrayed himself, knew all about it, and had the clearest understanding of the situation. Returning after an absence of ten minutes, he stated that Hiram would follow by-and-by; and hinting in a conversational manner that the day was dry, that in the coming interview it 'ud be awkward to have a fool like him a-lookin' on, and that there was a public-

house three hundred yards away, he received a gratuitous sixpence, and departed. Mary stood up in the car, and craned her neck to make observation of the carriage-drive, and in a little while saw Hiram, with his long legs striding out like the legs of a pair of compasses. At that spectacle her courage all deserted her, and she descended from the vehicle, and hiding herself behind the body of it, waited with palpitating bosom. Hiram came, looked about him, saw the car, and the fluttering dress behind it, and walked straight to where she stood.

'Now,' he said, 'I take this kind of you—I take it very kind.'

'Hiram!' said little Mary, looking up at him appealingly, with one outstretched hand set towards him.—He took the hand and shook it gravely, repeating that he took it very kind of her.—'Hiram,' she said dejectedly, 'aren't you going to kiss me?' Her lips pouted and trembled a little, like cherries that kiss each other on a shaken branch.

'Cert'nly!' said Hiram, and did it with solemn alacrity.

'Why don't you meet me as you used to?' she asked tremulously.

'Waal, my Pretty,' said Hiram, 'in the words of the immortal bard, Scotland stands not wheer it did.'

'I don't know what you mean,' she answered with an air of assumed disdain. 'You're not true-hearted, Hiram.'

'Mebbe I ain't,' said the accused; 'but I fancy I am.'

'Then,' said she with irresistible logic, 'why didn't you put your arm round my waist?'

'My dear,' said Hiram, serpentine his long arm about her, 'I'd always rather be asked into a man's house than be kicked out of it. I take this very kind of you, and very loyal an' true-hearted, my little dear.' He looked down at her with his queer fallow face beaming. 'You ain't sp'iled by fortune,' he said. 'Are you?'

'Hiram!' cried Mary again, and made an indignant pretence of tearing herself away from him. 'How could you think it of me?'

'I didn't,' said Hiram. 'Look at me. Is this here cheek of mine grown pale with care? Is my beamin' eye grown dim with hidden tears? Is there any sign in my hull anatomy of the gnawin' of the canker-worm? No, my dear. I ain't been fretting, not an atom. I've just been waiting for you to come, and say: "Hiram, your pretty loving little gal ain't changed." And now you come and say it, don't you?'—She said she did; and indeed, as she nestled to him and gazed up at him, it looked as if she meant it.—'That's all right,' pursued Hiram. 'Don't you see now, I couldn't come to you and say: "You took me when you was poor, and you'll have to stick to me now you're wealthy." I couldn't even seem to mean that. I won't say you'd have broke my heart, if you hadn't come. My heart's a tolerable tough old muscle, and it'd take a deal of breakin'. I won't say it wouldn't have ached. I think it would; but there's a margin between achin' and breakin', ain't there?'—Mary supposed so, laughing at his quaintly serious face, and holding his gaunt hand in both hers.—'But now,' resumed Hiram, 'there's no such thing as a clean hank as 'll run five minutes without ravelling in this

world, is there? And we've got trouble in front of us."

"Trouble?" she repeated. "What should trouble us?"

"Don't you be scared," said Hiram. "Nothing much. But you can see I'm bound to the boss for awhile to come, anyhow. Now, it stands to nature you want to get married, and so do I. And it stands to reason that a young lady with a fortune can't have her husband acting in my present capacity. In any other man's service, I should feel the present capacity mean. I own up to that; I should feel it a derogation from an American citizen's privileges and proper feelings. But not with Gerard Lumby, Esquire. No. Well now, you see, I don't want to scratch a sore place, but he's had a great deal of trouble, and I am kind of sorry for him and attached to him. He's got used to me, just as you have, my dear; and if I went away just now, he'd miss me. He's mending. I can't make it out; but from the night Mrs Strange died, he's that changed I hardly know him."

"How is he changed?" asked Mary, speaking rather because Hiram paused than for any other reason. She could not blame Hiram's unselfish devotion; but you may be sure that she looked forward to the waiting it promised with no great rejoicing.

"He used to be just as hard and cold," said Hiram, "as a frozen anvil. He won't like a man after you three went away together. And now he's as sweet and mild with everybody as a roarin' democrat receivin' a British Prince. He's sad sometimes—that mournful, it'd melt the innards of a Bengal tiger only to look at him. But it ain't the same kind o' sadness; and him and Valentine Strange was arm in arm walking up and down this road two mortal hours the day afore yesterday." He paused after that statement, as if he expected to be told that it was incredible. Mary received it with an astonishment which justified his expectation.

"Arm in arm!" she said. "Mr Strange and Mr Lumby! Mr Gerard?"

"Arm in arm," he said. "And looking as friendly as a pair of rival actors. Only it was plain they meant the friendliness, and the rival actors pretty gen'ally don't."

At this moment, a step sounded in the lane, and Mary escaping from his arm, peeped round the corner of the moss-grown wall. "The driver's coming back," she whispered.

"Kiss me quick, my honey!" said Hiram. "I shall see you soon. Likely as not, drop in and ask you for a cup of tea this evenin'."

The driver appeared; and Mary, with a final shake-hands, as if no tenderer farewell had just been taken, entered the car. Hiram, with mighty gravity of demeanour, watched her driven away, walked back along the gravelled drive, entered the house, and marched straight into the presence of his master.

"Well, Search," said Gerard, "what is it?"

"Can you spare me this afternoon and evenin'?" Hiram asked.

"Yes," said Gerard, looking up from a book which lay on the table before him.—"Search," he said suddenly, and with a little smile, "I have been neglecting your affairs very sadly. Are you going to Brierham?"

Here, for the first and last time in this narrative, let it be recorded that Hiram blushed. "I am," he said, defensively.

"Of course you are. Why haven't you gone before?"

"Well," said Hiram, "there was reasons, good reasons."

"No trouble, I hope?" said Gerard.

"None in the world," said Hiram.

"When do you think of getting married?" asked Gerard. "I suppose I shall lose you soon?"

"No; you won't," said Hiram. "We ain't in any hurry."

"Very well," said Gerard quietly. "She's living with old Mrs Norton, I think—isn't she, in Brierham High Street?—Ah, I thought so. Will you tell somebody to saddle Roland and bring him round? I shan't want you again to-day."

"Thank you," said Hiram, and went away on his errand.

"No train for two hours," said Gerard to himself with a sad little smile. "I can do it in an hour easily."

Ten minutes later, he was at the hall door in attire for the saddle. A groom led Roland round; and the young fellow, mounting, rode away, straight into Brierham town, and dismounting at the hotel, walked across the quiet sunny street and rang at Mrs Norton's bell. It happened at that moment that Mary was in converse with Mrs Norton. Your feminine lover seeks a confidante as a duck seeks the water. This, like other generalisations, may be disputed by singular examples; but Mary was not a very exceptional young woman, and Mrs Norton knew how the land lay; whilst the butcher and the corn-chandler, and the seedy captain and the Irish Quill, and *hoc genus omne*, surveyed it wrongly, and their judgment of its qualities was all awry. At the statement that a gentleman was in the parlour and wished to see her, the old lady bustled down, and was amazed to find Mr Gerard Lumby standing there.

"Mrs Norton," said Gerard, shaking hands with her, "how do you do? I am here as a conspirator, and I want you to be another."

"Lawkamussy, Mr Lumby!" said the old lady, quite flustered.

Gerard explained. "I want to see two people happy, Mrs Norton. One of them is the young person now residing under your protection, and the other is"—He paused.

"I hope it's the right man, sir," said the old lady, smiling nervously.

"I think it is," said Gerard. "Do you know who the right man is?—Very well. If I am wrong, correct me. I think the right man, who is in a position very much below his worth, wants to put off the marriage because he is attached to his employer, and because he thinks his employer cannot spare him."

"It's like a dream, your saying so, Mr Lumby," the old lady cried out. "She's just been telling me them very words up-stairs."

"Very well, Mrs Norton," said Gerard. "I thought it was so, and I wanted to be sure of it."

"She's a dear niec girl," said Mrs Norton doubtfully. "Do you think, sir, as he's worthy of her?"

"My dear lady," said Gerard, "Mr Search is

a pearl among men. The woman who marries him is to be envied, if she has only the sense to know his value. And whatever you may think of his position, he is just as well-to-do as she is. But I forgot. That's a secret. Don't say a word about it till they're married.' So he shook hands, and rode away again, leaving the old lady almost bursting with her secret.

(To be concluded next month.)

COUNTRY PLEASURES.

To outsiders, country-life often seems dull; and it must necessarily be so to some extent, as compared with life in town, unless there is not only a keen and perceptive love of nature, but also a considerable variety of taste. A man must be able to find not only an ever-varying and enduring charm in the sublime grandeur of lake and mountain, but also an attraction sufficiently engrossing to amuse him amid such commonplace scenes as the moist bank of a shady lane, or the tangled luxuriance of a hedgerow or wayside thicket.

A stranger looking down on the brown Lancashire landscape that surrounded our author, Mr Milner, when he began with the year his rambles, which have been charmingly described in his book, entitled, *Country Pleasures* (London: Longmans & Co.), would have pronounced the prospect tame and uninviting in the last degree. But to the initiated eye it was full of interest; each hidden dell among the breezy uplands held a secret treasure-trove. He knew each sequestered wood where the catkins of the hazel were already beginning to swell; each nook where the broad wrinkled leaves of the primrose were already pushing up through the moss to meet the genial breath of the advancing spring. Even in the sombre winter hue of the landscape, there was beauty—the beauty of shifting light and shade; when the sunlight breaking through the heavy clouds, would light up for a moment the brown dales and leafless trees, making of the desolate scene a picture of evanescent but glowing brightness. Then his garden—a green silvan inclosure, with sufficient space in it for wild-flowers to grow in the tangled profusion of their native glades and woods—was a constant source of delight to him. Like all flower-lovers, he knew each several plant—each blossom was an intimate and particular friend. He noted the slightest change that occurred in them, and during the tardy, trying days of spring, hailed each new leaf that uncurred to the cold north wind. Winter went and came again, as is its fashion in our uncertain climate; but in his garden he had, what many garden-loving folks sigh for in vain, a particular and highly-favoured corner—'where we always get out of the sharp wind; where there are a yellow jasmine and a few rose-bushes, and a shapely thorn with a seat under it. Round this is a little Dutch garden, in which the tulips and crocuses will first be seen.'

It was quite an era in his homely calendar when the faint February sunshine began to lend a little warmth to the cold moist air, and the delicate green tips of the snowdrop and crocus could be observed breaking through the half-frozen soil. Next—for the true lover of the country is always more or less a naturalist—he

began to expect, and then to hail with rapture the first notes of the blackbird and thrush, those sweet and gladsome heralds of the spring. Mr Milner first heard their welcome notes at the close of a wet week in February. 'A wet week in February!' you exclaim; 'can anything be more dreary?' Dreary enough, no doubt, to many. But to the observant eye, those dim and rain-suffused skies, with which we are so familiar, have a soft and gracious charm of their own. He has still much to learn in country pleasures who has never observed what a variety and beauty there often is in rainy weather; not only in those sudden showers where the sun sparkles through the gleaming raindrops with a fitful radiance, but even in the slow-falling misty rain, with little or no wind to blow it about, and no shaft of sunlight to illumine the masses of soft gray cloud and vapour. It is, of course, very possible to have too much of such a thing; and it is somewhat difficult always to remember, as we look at the drenched, water-soaked land, that it is to our moist skies that we owe the fresh colouring of our woods, and the vivid green of our meadows and grass-lands. Then there is always the delight of the fine morning or evening after the rain to look forward to, when the heavy skies burst asunder as if with a supreme effort; and the sun shines out warm and bright, and the cold moist earth basks in his smile; and the joyous breezes rustling through the leafless trees, seem already sweet with the scent of flowers. It was on such an evening, glorious and hope-inspiring, when the waning sunset faintly touched with its parting radiance the pointed gables of the ancient house, that Mr Milner heard his first thrush. A gush of melody clear and silvery rose flute-like and sweet into the darkening sky, and he knew that the birds were beginning to mate, and that the first nest—another landmark in the advancing year—might soon be looked for.

First, however, came Shrovetide, dear to the children's hearts, with its great bonfire of faded Christmas holly, and its pancakes tossed by unfamiliar hands. 'There is wisdom,' Mr Milner thinks, 'in breaking the dead monotony of modern existence by observing, especially for the sake of the young, such simple festivals as yet remain in vogue;' and so Shrovetide was observed with all its peculiar honours of hissing pan and savoury cakes.

In the beginning of April came the thrush's nest. This particular bird was a thrush with an evident taste for letters, for she had inwoven with the grass and slender twigs of her nest a scrap of a London newspaper, and had fixed her little dwelling snugly and comfortably beneath the overhanging leaves of some ivy that covered a garden summer-house. 'A day or two later,' says Mr Milner, 'it had been plastered with mud, and it was also lined—as a piece of luxury, I suppose—with the soft fibres of some decaying wood. Yesterday, I found that the first little blue egg had been dropped into the nest, which the present bird had finished three days before. And here too was beauty, the little regarded beauty of the bird's egg, beauty of form and of colour, perfect elementary form, and delicately simple colour lavished upon a corner where no eye might ever have seen it, where, probably, by no other eye than my own will it ever be seen.' This bird,

like others, became very familiar with its observer, and allowed him to come close to her nest without shewing any signs of fear.

Spring in her full flush and glory was now abroad in the land; the delicate leafage of the beech was in all its first silky freshness; the orchard-trees were in bloom; the cattle in the flowery meadows were deep in grass; the pigeons were sunning themselves on the farmhouse roofs, and the first early swallows were twittering under their eaves.

This beauty, home-like and familiar, Mr Milner was fond of contrasting with the vast moors that sweep desolate and brown around the huge 'buttress' of Kinderscout in Derbyshire. These were easily reached by train; and the very mode of transit, swift and noisy, an apt embodiment of the untiring energy of the nineteenth century, enhanced to the lonely beholder their solitude and immobility. 'Having once,' he says, 'climbed to the tableland of these moors, you are in an isolation of solitude which can only be compared with that of mid-ocean.' Their heathy expanse is a world by itself, set apart and consecrated to solitude, but yet a world full of beauty. The keen bracing air is permeated by the scent of the gorse and wild-thyme; masses of cloud drift along the breezy sky, now casting deep shadows on the sombre sweep of heathland, and the next moment parting asunder to dart a gleam of brilliant wind-blown sunshine on the emerald strips of moss, the clumps of brown and green fern, and the gray weather-beaten crags that rise like landmarks from the deep-toned umber hue of the heath. The moor-birds rise from beside the path with a wild and piercing cry. The glimmer of the sunshine becomes more unfrequent; the hurrying clouds drift up into more compact masses; everything betokens the coming tempest. A few minutes more, and the moorlands, with their shifting lights and shadows, will be wrapped in a cloud of swirling mist and rain.

With summer comes the hay-harvest in the beginning of July, the hottest time of the year; when, if the season be beneficent, we have bountiful outbursts of sunshine, and the scents of the rose-garden mingle with the fragrant breath of the new-mown hay. The most handsome wild-flower of July is the foxglove. Its favourite habitat is the face of a steep ravine, where the bank is too precipitous to afford a footing to the birch and hazel that clothe its lower declivities. There, on the shallow soil, or in clefts of the out-cropping rock, multitudes of foxgloves flourish, their pendent bells of purple waving in the breeze, or reflected in the still pools of the streamlet far below. There is no monotony in this blaze of purple beauty, which blends in admirably with the rich hues of the glen, with the fern and hazels, and the silvery stems of the birch-trees, and the tangle of wild-flowers about their roots, woodruff and wild-mint, and the gay willow-herb, and the humble little yellow tormentil.

Towards the end of July, the birds, whose domestic duties are finished, and whose families are comfortably established in the world, cease to sing. The woods henceforth are comparatively mute, until the robin begins his autumn song; and from his Lancashire garden Mr Milner moved to the coast of Arran, and noted with

some surprise that its northerly shores, which he had supposed to be sterile, produced abundance of flowers. 'At the edge of a wood only a few yards from the water, and where the salt spray itself must often fall, I found,' he says, 'diminutive rose-bushes covered with ripe berries; the wild chrysanthemum, the purple vetch; the woodruff, tiny in size, but sweet as ever; and even the dainty forget-me-not; while the woodbine festoons the trees, climbing to a height of twenty feet.'

But more beautiful even than the flowers are the effects of sea and mountain. The sea, which is always in the foreground of the picture, is full of surprises, of infinite varieties, which often strike the beholder as inconceivably beautiful. Every change of the changeful weather has its own peculiar charm; and the soft gray September skies of Arran often brighten at sunset into stretches of lambent gold, resting on a bank of bright crimson, which passes on the far horizon into dusky purple; and beneath that imperial pall, the heaving expanse of water, and the shallow pools left on the shore by the receding tide, gleam out as if touched with molten gold. The colouring is almost too intense to be steadily looked at. The grass and the shore-plants, and the weather-worn rocks, and the hills with their wild peaks standing out against the sky, all glow with a deep and yet subdued intensity of shade, which brightens the rose-red glimmer of the rock-pool at your feet. Up among the hills at the mouth of Glen Sannox, particularly towards twilight, the atmospheric changes are often very fine. Sheets of mist sweep around the peaks of Goatfell and its sister heights, which, like the sentinels of an enchanted land, loom through the masses of gray vapour, indistinct, vast, and threatening. The gloom of night is beginning to overspread the landscape; but the sun has not yet set; and suddenly, as if by the touch of a magician's wand, the veil of mist is swept aside from the broad brow of Suidhe Fergus; a soft subdued glow of saffron suffuses the darkening landscape, brightening gradually into a full gush of sunlight. The slopes and gullies with which the sides of the hills are seamed are distinctly seen for a moment, brought prominently out by the flood of light. Then the gleam of sunshine fades as quickly as it came, the clouds gather thick and fast over the shifting canvas, the wild west wind rushes down the gorge, hurrying mists efface the glowing picture, and far behind, 'strange sounds rushing down the unseen gullies with an almost human cadence,' bid the adventurous traveller a stormy good-night.

Autumn in the Lancashire garden had its own peculiar pleasures. There were plentiful stores of fruit to be gathered in, and clumps of woodland that rivalled, with their purple and russet-red and gold, the gayest hues of the parterre; and from amid the leafless boughs of a giant elm was heard 'the sweetest, most cheery sound which autumn has to give—the clear whistle of the robin.'

Halloween was kept as Shrovetide had been, by the youngsters of the family, with its own appropriate ceremonies. Chief among these was a great pail of water, which was set in the middle of the kitchen floor and filled with apples—'the ducking and splashing for which were a source

of great fun; and if one chooses to moralise,' says our author, 'one may see how success in the slippery chase falls only to the youngster who can bring to the pursuit both cunning and perseverance.'

November and December, with their long dark nights, and days dim with mist and fog, have a natural affinity with folklore, and Mr. Milner tells us that the district around him, lonely and isolated, is still a stronghold of ancient superstitions. There are troops of harmless fairies—'little men,' as they are called—whom it is sometimes the height of good fortune to meet. Wonderful legends are told of the weary ploughman suddenly confronted on the upturned furrow by a tiny brown figure, who offered him a draught of ale in a nutshell; which the countryman accepting in simple good faith, found to be an earnest of all possible good things.

A mountainous country suffers less from the fury of the elements than a landscape whose chief beauty consists in its colouring, in the harmonious blending of wood and valley and meadow. The stormy winds of November had swept away the last lingering splendour of the autumn forests, but Mr. Milner found the Lake country still pre-eminently beautiful. In support of his admiration of winter among these classical lakes and hills, he quotes an eloquent passage from Wordsworth's 'Description of the Country of the Lakes in the North of England': 'The variety of winter-colouring in the hills is such, and so harmoniously preserved, that it leaves little cause of regret when the splendour of autumn is passed away. The oak coppices upon the sides of the mountain retain russet leaves; the birch stands conspicuous with its silver stem and puce-coloured twigs; the hollies, with green leaves and scarlet berries, have come forth to view from among the deciduous trees, whose summer foliage had concealed them; the ivy is now plentifully apparent upon the stems and boughs of the trees and among the lichen-covered rocks. In place of the uniform summer green of the herbage and fern, many rich colours play into each other over the surface of the mountains—tawny green, olive, and brown, beds of withered fern and gray rocks being harmoniously blended together.' It is, in fact, a perfect paradise of what painters call 'low tones,' no bright colours, but the soft subdued green and gray of mosses and lichens, and the faded browns of grass and ferns in all varieties of shade. Round the door of a comfortable farmhouse, where our author found shelter for a few hours, the colour was deeper and warmer; for the crimson light of a frosty sunset filled the air, and harmonised with the cheerful farmyard sounds; the cocks were crowing, the oxen lowed from the courts, and the glad voices of women and children broke the wintry stillness. Every one was sliding and tumbling and getting up again amid peals of jocund laughter; and far up in a still world of their own, the snows on the higher peaks of the everlasting hills reflected back in a thousand hues of beauty the smile of the sunset. Some blushed rosy red; others caught only a faint pink glow, which quickly faded into spectral blue; while others, again, glistered cold and bright, as if decked out in robes of shining silver.

This charming round of Country Pleasures ends, as is meet, with Christmas and New Year, with plentiful decorations of mistletoe and holly, and plentiful good cheer on the board, and a round of kindly visits to neighbours, rich and poor alike. One of the latter, John the Mower, thus pronounced his eulogium on the happy Christmas-tide: 'Ay, well—ay, to be sure—if we could be ever as we are now, full of good meat and drink—meat and drink.' The robin on the thorn, who has just had his dinner of crumbs from the window-sill, takes perchance the same materialistic view of Christmas as John the Mower; at all events, he also is happy, and undaunted by the cold, trills out upon the frosty air his clear, cheerful song, in which we hear an earnest and promise of the coming spring.

BABOO ENGLISH.

THE following specimens of letters and petitions are taken from a large collection made by a gentleman during a six years' residence in British Burmah. It should be borne in mind that the habit of the Oriental, when he has a request to make, is usually to hand in a written petition in lieu of asking by word-of-mouth. Those of the documents quoted below which are from Chinamen and Burmese, are written by their own hands; while those from natives of India are mostly written by professional petition-writers, who may be seen sitting under an umbrella, at a light trestle table, beneath a tree, near the entrances to the law-courts.

The things that chiefly agitate the Oriental mind are (1) desire to obtain an appointment; (2) desire to obtain increase of pay; (3) desire to obtain leave of absence on account of the death of some relative. It is no uncommon thing for a clerk to request leave of absence half-a-dozen different times to bury the same mother, truthfulness being an unknown quality in many parts of the 'gorgeous East.'

The following inass of incoherence is from a Burmese 'gunner' to the superintendent of a saw-mill. His desire is to obtain a bonus—on the number of squared logs of teak which he is able to turn out—in addition to his pay.

To G. MORA Esq., Chief Manager.

The humble petition of Ko Youk respectfully sheweth to represent that; I have loyally, and diligently served under merchantile service in various capacities since 1870 during which I invariably earned the approval, and commendations of all my superiors. That while several persons are now and then promoted gradually increasing in the subordinate; That in 1880 when I was proposed to station at Moulmein the best European Manager serving in the Moulmein district I was selected by the Chief Manager Mr R. S. Jones for the post as Head Clerk at Mr Gregory's Mill and I could act as Manager in any of the mills that are Trading in the Town of Moulmein I understand that my manager is prepared to reconsider the claims of all the subordinate who have not hitherto receive due promotion in the service I therefore pray that my manager may carefully inquired of my approved past service and can forward my Certificate bound

as Manager having being served under your service daily respectfully beg to inform these few request that I am also liable to get some extra money on account of my Square Conversion which has been given by the Former manager's on the Squaring Mill I conclusion having a large family to support with I have to thank your esteem favor and hoping to favor with the above request for which I shall ever thankful to your honors gratitude; Hoping to be excused at your honors valuable time P.S. Therefore having served under your service many Head Clerks who have not had any a English education in case of necessity I could do any kinds of English account in the Timber Trading line and *being very curious in my consideration of getting extra money in the Old Mill is somewhat like hatching a great many eggs without a Hen* If I dont try hard in conversion of Squares how can you expect to got the Slabs for Scantling &c.—I remain, &c.

The passage we have italicised is particularly lucid. The next specimen is from a Madrassee Christian who has benefited by an English education.

RANGOON, 3rd January 1881.

To J. CONNELL, Esquire,
B. B. T. C. Limited & Co.
Rangoon.

GENTLEMAN—I beg most respectfully to bring these following few lines to your benign consideration Hoping to Satisfy my confused mind.

Sir, I have come from Madras some months ago, and I have tried in many places for a post except this Office I am Sorry proved unsuccessful. Having heard that you are a Liberal Generous and Pitiable gentleman towards poor. I have made up my mind to come and ask your honor for a post under your controlability in the Firm or in the Mills.

Praying to comply my request for which act of charity and kindness I shall in duty bound shall ever pray—I beg to remain, Gentleman, your most obedient and humble Servant, V. REUBEN JACOB.

By the following amusingly ambiguous epistle, a Burmese clerk states his incapacity for work, and expresses a hope that further sick-leave may be granted him:

SIR—Having the fever again more than before I wish you will not have the vexation to permit me further.—I Remain Yr obed.

MG CHIT Oo.

The following speak for themselves:

MOULMEIN, 9th April 1881.

SIR—We are exceeding glad in penning you these few lines, suspecting the holidays of the Burmese new year. During this time all the Burmese offices or of—the foreigners ought to be closed. Because there is custom over the whole communication not to do even the least important work. Therefore will you kindly grant us leave for three or four days. We hope that you will grant us leave without any discontent.—We are yours most Obedient servant, &c.

SIR—We the undersigned beg to inform, that on Tomorrow our Burmese Lent beginning Feast

will be fell, so we shall most humbly beg of you will be pleased to allow us an holiday as usual.—We remain, Sir, Your Most Obedient Servants, &c.

HONOURED SIR—I beg most respectfully prays that your honor will be kindly pleased allow me an advance of R30/ being of our Chinese new year, but, I am short of expense for that day.—I beg to remain, Gentleman Sir, Your Most Obedient Servant,
MAY SHAIING.
[Chinese]

RANGOON 6th February 1880.

SIR—I have the honor to inform you that I was sunstruck and Fever on account of that Your servant could not attend to work.—I remain, &c.

The humble and respectful petition of K. B. B—.

Most respectfully sheweth—That your petitioner, an under graduate of the Calcutta University has formerly lived in credit in the world, but, through a variety of losses in several law-suits and through the sudden death of some *lively young members of the family*, is reduced with his family to the lowest state of poverty and destitute of the necessities of life; and being desirous to discharge his duty as a sole guardian, he has presumed to address himself to your honor for one of the present vacant place of clerkship in your Office, and for which he can make it appear, he is properly qualified, and will produce certificates of his education, capacity and good moral character, and if so happy as to seem worthy of your notice, he shall, on all occasions observe the strictest fidelity, and make it appear to the world that he has not been unworthy of your favour; And as in duty bound shall ever pray.

On the 24th of October 1881, the writer promised a Burman, Moungh Khyin, to employ his brother-in-law, Moungh Shway Yee, if he would come round to the office. This is the letter of introduction which Shway Yee brought: the meaning is, that Moungh Khyin will be much obliged if Shway Yee is employed according to promise:

DEAR SIR—Herewith I send you the bearer Moungh Shway Yee, was employed under you in the Office, when you promised me Yesterday in Our Yard. I shall be much oblige and thankful to you.—Yours faithfully, MOUNGH KHYIN.

Boon Paw, a Chinese tally-clerk, being laid up with fever, his brother, Ah Lowe, writes for permission to send him to his father in Moulmein, and wants to know if he is to receive half-pay or none at all while he is ill. This is how he puts it:

SIR—My brother Boon Paw Tally clerk, suffering by fever since about 20 days ago, and he is taking our Docter advise, but sorry still very bad, so begging of you be pleased to allow him to go back Moulmein on Tomorrow by his father to cure there. And also please let me have an order the 15 Days he is in fever in one month of Augst is to be cut all or $\frac{1}{2}$ to be paid.—Yours obediently, &c.

The final specimen we shall here give is an application for work, made by a native of India,

to a merchant of Rangoon, and was thought so comical by the recipient, although he was—like all other residents in Rangoon—daily deluged with strangely worded petitions, that it was published in the *Rangoon Gazette* of February 14, 1879.

'There is life for a keen look.'

LIFE SUPPORTING SIR—The bearer of this begs to bring his most deplorable case before you trusting you to be his parent and guardian. That he is brought to such a low circumstance that he can hardly support himself and his family. Now your humble petitioner begs to say that if there be even a petty post in clerks under kind control please try your utmost to confer the same on him. Sure he is in an unutterable trouble that this life is heavier to him, nay, the shades of death are happier to him than those of life. Let it not be hidden that as in these days he is out of employment it would be your great kindness to confer some good and supportable post on him and as he is a man of large family to please for your blessed name's sake be a father to him and his family. Please lose not this good opportunity out of your all powerful hands of making a room for him under you in clerks. Surely in such a hard circumstance your refusal will be the cause of real death and your kind reception the real cause of life for him.

Now let any one go, but please try your utmost to save him, pass by any one, but pass not by him, reject some one, but reject not him, and put asunder some one, but make him adhere close by in any way you can. Please take him in your kind honour's office as soon as possible. Nay, sooner than the twinkling of an eye.

As one has the source of his life in this and another in that way but he alone has none except thee and God alone. O Thou high-ranked man of good humour. For this act of your over running you shall both be blessed and rewarded from heavens.

P.S.—A drowning man will catch at a straw. Pour not water on a drowned mouse. Give and it shall be given unto you. The measure we mete to others shall be meted to us again. A withered purse, a withered face. Sorrow's best antidote is employment, &c.

He begs to remain,
most honoured Sir,
with much gratitude
your most obedient and
foot-kissing servant
18-7-78. ILLAHIE BUKSH.

BOOK GOSSIP.

It may be pointed out as a characteristic of our modern men of science and of their immediate predecessors, that, however they may differ from many of their fellows in matters of intellectual research and speculation, they have led notably good and true and useful lives. Hence the record of such lives has for their successors something more than the interest which attaches to merely great names; there is in addition the healthy stimulus to intellectual and moral achievements which we derive from the contemplation of adverse circumstances patiently overcome, of high ends worthily gained, of life-purposes devotedly followed out. This is indeed the great end of

biography; and biography which, while embracing many things, does not embrace this, had better not be written.

Some of those men of science have had biographers innumerable, others of them are less written about, and consequently less known. To supply this defect, and to render the chief names among Botanists, Zoologists, and Geologists more familiar to the rising generations, Professor P. Martin Duncan, vice-president of the Geological Society, has published a volume of such biographies under the title of *Heroes of Science* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). But the book is something more than a mere collection of biographies. In regard to Botany, for instance, chapters are given to the consideration of old fancies and notions about plants, such as are found in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, and in the works of the early Greek writers. The author also sketches the lives of the ancient botanists—Aristotle, the first botanist, born 384 B.C., Theophrastus, Pliny, and others. Then, after the long sleep of centuries, we have the revival of science that followed the release of the human mind from the trammels of superstition consequent upon the great religious reformations of the sixteenth century. This period gave us the quaint old English naturalist and traveller, John Ray, and the earliest systematic botanist in France, Joseph de Tournefort. Then by-and-by came Linnæus, and with him the formation of botany into a science, with his artificial system of classification, and his untiring and heroic energy in the pursuit of plant-knowledge.

In the department of Zoology, Professor Duncan follows a similar method of treating the subject, beginning with the ancients, and descending to modern names, including Buffon, Pennant, Lamarck, and Cuvier, to each of whose contributions to the science of animals reference is here made, with well-written and graphic portraiture of the men themselves, as they appeared in the daily round of their life and labours. Then we have the Geologists—the heroes of a newer science than either of the foregoing. A wonderful science, that has made familiar to us a kind of knowledge which was at one time thought entirely beyond the reach of man's intellectual vision, revealing to us an exact and impressive picture of our earth in its various stages of secular cooling, from the time when it was little more than a molten mass with a newly-formed igneous crust, down to the time when this crust was covered with rocks made from its own waste materials, ground down by ice and tides and rains, and spread out in stratified order at the bottom of seas and the mouths of great rivers, and gradually covered with the earlier forms of vegetable life, till we have the globe as we see it now with all its wealth of animate and inanimate existence. This portion of Professor Duncan's work seems to us to be the most interesting, as dealing perhaps with the heroes of a science in which he may feel a stronger and more genuine interest than in the others. The story of Hutton, the Edinburgh geologist; of William Smith, the father of English geology; and of Murchison and Lyell, its later leading representatives, is well told by our author, and cannot fail to awaken in the minds of readers some stirrings of that noble emulation which led these

workers on from victory to victory. We have not for a long time seen biography at once so healthy in its tone and so instructive and stimulative in its effects.

A SLIGHT SCARE.

In the first of those four entertaining little volumes, *Curiosities of Natural History*, the late Mr Frank Buckland has related, in his pleasant, chatty, discursive style, an anecdote of a gentleman in India who was favoured with the presence of a cobra da capello under the flooring of his bungalow. Snakes very often take up a residence beneath houses in this way, especially in tropical countries, where the buildings are frequently of wood, and usually raised from the damp or insect-teeming earth on piles of some sort; such a situation being almost inaccessible to anything but a 'varmint.' Here they rest in security by day, and by night sally forth on excursions prejudicial to the henroost, to the frogs in the water-tank or bathroom, or to the rats and other small-deer which always affect the neighbourhood of omnivorous man. So habituated do people become to these creatures in serpent-ridden lands, that so close a vicinity to them is often but little regarded, and scarcely any attempt is made to eject the visitor. I once slept in a house up in Guatemala where a huge venomous snake, a *toboba*—or what was believed to be such—was known to have made the under-space among the piles his abode for more than a year, having been frequently seen by lantern-light, though it never made its appearance indoors. Not that people are fonder of such things in this part of the world than in any other; possibly, they are a little lazier; but in any case, familiarity will always breed contempt. Mr Buckland's friend, however, so little appreciated this confidence on the part of the reptile, that he went the length of cutting a hole in his floor, baiting a fish-hook and line with a frog and passing it down. The lure succeeded. That same night he was aroused by a tremendous scuffle and commotion under the boards; and the line being drawn up, brought with it the unlucky cobra, with its neck expanded and 'spectacles' all agog—when, we may be sure, it quickly received the *coup de grâce* from a coolie's bludgeon.

I had been reading this story one hot night at sea as I lay in my bunk, and had fallen asleep. Scarcely a breath of air came in at the open scuttle, and the candle in the swinging stand burned with an unflickering flame, though the good ship *Elbe* was steaming down the coast of Brazil at the rate of thirteen knots an hour; for my cabin was on the 'lee-side,' and the lower edge of the porthole descended pretty nearly to the level of the water as she rolled slowly and rhythmically to and fro on a long swell from the westward. How long I slept, I cannot say; but when I awoke with a start, the candle had burned out, and the cabin was pitch-dark. What had waked me? Was it fancy, bred of the snake-story I had been reading, the impression of which was still vividly upon me, mystified and exaggerated by the sudden transition of ideas, or did I really hear a scuffling and flopping on the floor? Yes, there was no doubt about it! Something was

slapping and writhing about over the bare boards with just such a noise as a hooked snake would make. After a moment's hesitation, I sprang out of bed to strike a light, and had taken a second step with the intention of groping for my matches, when, horror! I put my bare foot on something cold, slimy, and *alive*—wrigglingly and twistingly alive, as it 'squirmed' under my naked sole! I think I have stood on few objects for a shorter space of time than that during which I lingered on that creature; and darting back to bed again, lay there with a beating heart, and bathed in perspiration. Presently, the flopping ceased; but only to break out with renewed vigour after the lapse of a minute, and just as I was cautiously attempting another descent upon my matches, causing me to retreat once more with extreme expedition. It soon stopped again, and was resumed at longer and longer intervals and with less energy. The cobra was evidently growing weaker. At length, it ceased altogether. Whereupon I seized all the garments within reach, and hurled them on the floor in the direction from which the sounds had proceeded, hoping the reptile would seek shelter underneath them and remain quiescent during the night.

Now, of course this was all very foolish. There was no cobra within thousands of miles of me; besides, I am not more afraid of a snake than other people, knowing perfectly well that if I lay still it would not molest me. I think I would, under most circumstances, rather have a cobra than a cockroach near me. Thus I reasoned with my absurd terror, but to very little purpose. If there were no cobras in Brazil, there were other snakes just as venomous—rattlesnakes, jataracas, and bushmasters. Snakes often found their way on board ships in bales of medicinal woods, coir, and other cargo; or dropped into boats as they lay under bushes or along palm-shaded jetties; or escaped from boxes surreptitiously smuggled from the shore. It recurred to my disordered brain—I would have it remembered that I was weak and unwell—with great force, that only a short time before, a living serpent was actually discovered under the capsule of the patent lead on the quarter-deck of the Royal Mail steamship *Dowry*, within a hundred miles of where we were, the reptile having obviously climbed up the quarter-line as the steamer lay moored to the wharf at Santos. Furthermore, though I can tolerate anything which I can see and understand, I have the greatest respect for the unknown in darkness.

All very foolish, as I kept reproaching myself; but it was of no use. The silence which succeeded was even worse than the slapping noise, and my fever-heated imagination kept picturing the snake gliding up over my bunk, and made me start as I fancied I felt its forked tongue darting against my hand or cheek; while I repeatedly kneaded my foot, to assure myself of the unreality of the thrills which shot up my leg. At last I gave way, and standing up on the bed, shouted through the ventilator at the top of my voice for the quarter-master. By-and-by I heard a distant 'Ay, ay, sir!' floating down the hatchway from the deck above, and presently saw the welcome gleam of a lantern along the alley-way. I was somewhat ashamed of my trepidation when the light arrived; and proceeded to remove the

pile of coats and trousers, seeking for the 'varmint' with a boldness which was not mine a few moments before. And there, on the floor, which glistened with its beaten-off scales, we found—a *flying-fish*, as big as an ordinary mackerel, which had sailed in at the open port as the ship rolled to leeward, and had danced itself to death on the boards! Its entrance must have been a pure accident, though not a very uncommon one in these latitudes. The fish seems to have little power of directing its flight in the air, and the aperture of the scuttle no doubt came in its straight line of course. I need hardly say I did not mention anything of my late ophidian hypothesis to the quartermaster, but presented him with the subject of it. Probably it was cooked and eaten as soon as he came off watch, for the flying-fish is one of the most delicious of the denizens of ocean.

Flying-fish are certainly preferable to venomous serpents in one's cabin, even were the latter entangled with hooks in their stomachs; but the finny intruder can make himself disagreeable too, at times. I remember an old Frenchman rushing on deck one night with his face and breast streaming with blood, roaring out that the Enemy of mankind was below; when it was found that the 'enemy' on this occasion was a large flying-fish, which had flown against him and scratched him severely with its enormous fin-wings.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

RESPECT for relics of the past, and a desire to preserve those landmarks of time which speak of a period when no books were written and no histories compiled, are feelings which denote an advanced state of civilisation. We have learned Societies which take perhaps more interest in prehistoric man and his cave-dwellings than they do in their fellow-beings of this present time. We have Archaeologists who can tell us all about the pile-dwellings the remains of which are found in Swiss lakes and in many other parts of the world; and we have others who will discourse to us concerning the three Ages of man as represented by the Stone, Bronze, and Iron implements which he has left behind him. The interest which centres around the buried cities of the world is naturally of a wider nature; for there are records which give us an insight into the lives of those who peopled such cities. The ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii have an unusual interest attached to them from their terrible end. But other ruined cities have in them plenty to arouse the curiosity and to interest the attention of the antiquary. Of these places, a foremost position must be given to the ruins of Ephesus, which, from its scriptural associations, must plead recognition from all. But the ruins of Ephesus have not been taken care of; we learn that the city is a mass of ruined columns, fragments of arches, broken sarcophagi, and that it is covered with debris. The Temple of Diana, supposed to have been the most magnificent in the world,

has now little to distinguish it from the rubbish surrounding it, although a piece of marble here and there gives, from its exquisite tracery, an idea of former splendour. The Ephesus Exploration Committee are appealing to the public for funds to carry on their work, and it is to be hoped that they will be instrumental in preserving the ruined city from further dilapidation.

Funds are also sought to aid the Society of Antiquaries in excavating what are considered to be among the most remarkable relics of the Roman occupation of Britain. The famous hot springs of Bath afford plenty of evidence that the Romans appreciated their good qualities, for they took the trouble to build round them a massive wall, cased on the inside with lead. Excavations beneath the pump-room have revealed the existence of an old bath eighty-one feet in length by thirty-eight in width, floored with blocks of masonry, and retaining its old lining of lead. There are indications that these Roman baths occupied a large area, the greater portion of which still remains buried beneath more modern buildings.

Mr Carl Bock, the Swedish traveller, whose explorations in Borneo have been brought before the public in book-form, has recently returned from an adventurous trip into Siam, and has visited many districts where no European has previously penetrated. In spite of the cordial protection offered by the king, and His Majesty's command that Mr Bock should carry the royal standard of Siam, the white-elephant flag, the traveller met with great opposition in various parts of the country. The inhabitants were not impressed with a sight of the white-elephant flag, perhaps because they had no idea of the importance attached to such a national emblem. Unfortunately, they showed their dislike to Mr Bock's progress by destroying a large portion of the natural-history collection which he had accumulated.

A St Louis newspaper furnishes some interesting facts in connection with alligator-catching and killing, occupations which give employment to a large number of persons in the south of the United States. The mode of catching the creature is as follows: The young ones are first secured as they play about the hole where the parent is lying. A noose is then so arranged that immediately the animal emerges from its lurking-place, its head is thrust within it. Another noose is then secured to the tail; and the animal is strapped down to a board, and is towed away behind a boat in which her young ones are placed. The hide of a large alligator is worth between one and two dollars, and can be transformed into splendid leather. Besides this, the alligator is valued for the oil which it affords, which, although of an unpleasant odour, is considered a good remedy for rheumatism.

The Report of the department of Agriculture of Manitoba will remove the impression which, for some unascertained reason, has gained currency—that little or no fruit could be raised there. The list of fruits indigenous to Manitoba and the North-west Territory given in this Report is by no means a scanty one. Plums, grapes, cherries, currants; all kinds of berries,

from raspberries and strawberries to the more humble blackberry, flourish here in profusion. The Report also removes another fallacy—namely, that the crab-apple must be the only representative of its class which can flourish in Manitoba. It is pleaded that the same idea was once urged with regard to other States which are now exporting their thousands of barrels of splendid apples to foreign markets.

We have more than once referred to the systems of drying hay, which, according to many reports, have been so successful, but which, according to the judges at the last show of the Agricultural Society, were not thought worthy of the prize offered for the best method. Another mode of storing food for stock is now arousing the interest of farmers; and it offers, both in cheapness and simplicity, no obstacle to a trial of its merits. That these merits are great, seems unquestionable, from reports which have reached this country from the continent and from the United States. The system in question is known as *Ensilage*, and consists in storing green fodder in a specially constructed air-tight pit called a *Silo*. This pit can be of any convenient size, and the best material for its walls is concrete. The materials with which it is stored may consist of every kind of green food used for cattle, excepting roots. These are usually cut into short lengths by a machine, and are then thrown into the pit. The vegetable mass is then covered with planks, and weighted with barrels of sand until its bulk is reduced about two-thirds. A certain amount of fermentation is naturally set up; but it does not appear to affect the flavour of the stored food, which cattle eat greedily. Even in the wettest weather, the fodder can be so stored without risk of failure, if the operation be properly conducted. The *silo* is opened periodically, when the food is cut away in sections, just as a truss of hay is cut from a stack; but if necessary, the opening can be postponed to an indefinite period, as the fodder keeps as well as if it were sealed down in an air-tight tin can. We cannot meanwhile devote space to enumerate the advantages which are claimed for this new departure in agriculture, but intend recurring to the subject in an early number.

Miss Ormerod's lecture, given at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, on 'The Effects of Weather on Insect Life,' contained some interesting observations relating to hibernation. The lecturer pointed out that this phenomenon was a distinct condition from the mere effect of cold, and assumed a constitutional influence, under which, at a certain season, insects instinctively prepared a shelter for themselves. This shelter was specially selected under leaves or stones; and in some cases they prepared a cell to protect their bodies, while they passed into a motionless state, with functions decreasing in power with increase of cold. Though frozen so hard that they could be broken across like dried sticks, many kinds of caterpillars were not injured by the cold so long as they were protected in the shelters which they had selected or made for themselves. The remedy for getting rid of such pests was for farmers to cultivate their land in the autumn, so as to throw out and expose the creatures to the frost, thaw, and wet which followed. The egg-laying places—rank grasses and weeds—should be destroyed;

and it should also be remembered that liming and the use of chemical manures are important factors in diminishing the number of insect pests.

More than forty years ago, there was a strange craft which appeared upon the waters of the Neva. It was contrived by a Russian Professor named Jacobi, and was worked by electricity. Since that time, we have made great strides in electrical science, and the batteries which Jacobi used, with their zinc plates and corrosive acids, have been supplanted by dynamo-machines turned by steam-power. The modifications of Planté's secondary batteries, which have recently made such a stir in the world, have opened up new employments for electricity, and the latest which has been recorded is once more represented by a battery-driven boat. This electric launch was recently tried on the Thames with satisfactory results. It measures twenty-six feet in length, and draws about two feet of water. It has neither fire, boiler, nor chimney; indeed, it is without any visible means of propulsion. But stowed away under flooring and seats are forty-five boxes, containing secondary batteries, which, before starting on its trial trip, were charged by a dynamo-machine on shore. It was calculated that the power stored was equal to that of four horses, and would last for six hours. From the electrician's point of view, the boat is a great success. But in order to find out whether it can compete with steam, we must learn its cost of construction, particulars of wear and tear, cost of power expended in charging the batteries, &c. Of late years, we have learned what electricity can do in the way of storage, in transmission of power, and in giving us light. To successfully compete with existing systems, it must be equally cheap.

One more recent electrical application is deserving of notice, from its useful and practical character. This is a contrivance for stopping a steam-engine by the mere pressure of a button, which button may be at a point at any distance from the engine itself; or there may be numerous buttons at different points, the pressure on any one of which will stop the engine. We need not enter into the details of the contrivance, beyond saying that an electro-magnet acts instantaneously upon the stop-valve of the engine. Its use in large cotton or woollen mills—to which it has recently been applied by the inventor, Mr Tate—is obvious, when we remember how easily some accident may arise, when it may be necessary to stop the works without a moment's delay. Another projected use for it is on board ship, so that in case of impending collision, the captain can himself turn off the steam, without losing time by signalling in the usual way to the engineer in charge. The apparatus is manufactured by Duncan Brothers, 32 Queen Victoria Street, London.

The phrase 'Recommended by the faculty,' has been long a favourite one with clever advertisers, who know well that the majority of persons look upon doctors as magicians and their drugs as infallible. Indeed, the superstition natural to man may be said to show itself principally in the modern belief in drugs; hence the success of any patent medicine which is sufficiently well advertised. But beyond ordinary drugs, there are a number of well-known remedies for various

complaints, which, under the care of garrulous old nurses and others, have been handed down from generation to generation, and frequently employed; but which are neither recognised nor recommended by the faculty. An instance in point is afforded by a means of dressing wounds which has been successfully practised by Dr Neuberg. Two years ago, a labourer presented himself who had sustained, some days previously, a compound fracture of both bones of the forearm. A comrade at the time of the accident had surrounded the limb with a thick paste of peat-mould. Dr Neuberg, on examining the wound, found that it was healing beautifully and without suppuration. The limb was then better fixed, redressed, and the man made a good recovery. The doctor was then led to investigate the properties of this peat-mould, which doubtless had had so much to do with the patient's rapid recovery. He found it to be, as is well known of it in peaty districts, a powerful antiseptic, and to take up nine times its own weight of water. Its soft nature allows it to be placed in bags in required positions on the body, and it has the further advantage of being cheap. This peat-mould, the virtues of which have thus been transmitted to us by a labouring-man, is likely to prove a most useful agent in dressing wounds.

At the Paris Academy lately, some curious and interesting notes relative to sulphur-fumes as a preventive of malaria were read by M. d'Abbadie. He stated that some elephant-hunters from plateaux with comparatively cool climate can go into the hottest and most deleterious Ethiopian regions without being attacked by fever, and that they attribute their safety to the daily practice of fumigating their naked bodies with sulphur. He also quoted cases where sulphur-mines were free from disease, whilst the inhabitants of villages near at hand were constantly attacked by fever. It has always appeared to us that sulphur as a curative agent has been too much neglected in our own country.

The approach of the burglar season has been as usual ushered in by many suggestions for the protection of nervous householders. Among recent contrivances for confounding the schemes of housebreakers, a lamp has been invented which acts as a kind of danger-signal to the police. It is connected with a battery and wires to any doors or windows which need protection, and so long as such apertures are shut, the lamp burns with a white light; but directly an attempt is made to force an entrance, a red-glass disc falls before the lamp, and tells the passing policeman that there is something wrong. Our own opinion is that a good loud-tongued electric bell would be far more serviceable. A burglar who found that by his act of forcing a window he had set up an alarm which would wake the entire household, would most certainly make good his retreat without delay. The old-fashioned plan of fixing a common bell into the shutter-bar is by no means to be despised.

At the Sanitary Exhibition at Newcastle, the Richardson gold medal for 'an exhibit of pre-eminence' has been awarded to Siemens's regenerative gas-burner. This burner, by complete combustion, is said to save fifty per cent.

of gas, while at the same time it does not vitiate the air of the place in which it is used. At the same Exhibition, some very successful smoke-consuming stoves were shown, which have been adopted in some lead-works at Newcastle, solely for the good of the town; for where manufacturers only pay about three shillings per ton for their fuel, there is little need to employ such contrivances solely on the score of economy.

It is a curious slur on our boasted civilisation in this nineteenth century, that old and well-worn superstitions should crop up from time to time, and should receive a vast amount of credence from persons whose minds are not supposed to be unhinged. Ghosts, spiritual manifestations of the Brothers Davenport type, second-sight, and even witchcraft, occasionally show a vitality which is extraordinary. The divining-rod is the last exhumation of this character. Legendary lore as to the efficacy of a twig, balanced between the fingers of certain gifted persons, is common to the traditions of every country. The twig, or divining-rod, is supposed to point out by its movements the exact place of buried treasure, the place to bore for water, the occurrence of mineral lodes, and it will also help in pointing out the whereabouts of a murderer or other felon! A certain Madame Caillavah is said to have this gift of 'working the twig,' as it is vulgarly called; and it is reported that under the auspices of the French government, she is about to try her powers above the pavement of St. Denis, in search of buried treasure. If the report be true—and we must assume that it is so from an article in the *Times*, and the curious correspondence which it has called forth—we can only say that the enterprise is not altogether creditable, and we may probably look for an ending to it which will be quite as disastrous if not so amusing as that which happened to Dousterswivel in the *Antiquary*.

The island of Cyprus has the unenviable possession of a description of locust found nowhere else. Its vast numbers raise it to the position of a plague, which, like that of old Egypt, would eat up every green thing in the land, if measures were not taken for its destruction. The government reward of what would be in our currency one halfpenny a pound for locust-eggs, which was trebled as the eggs became scarcer, resulted in the collection of nearly fourteen hundred tons in seven months. The payment of these rewards, together with the expense of constructing traps and screens to intercept the insect army, cost altogether more than one-fifth the total revenue of the island.

Some months ago, we referred to a new method of blasting coal by the heat and expansion caused by wetting cartridges of compressed lime. The system was then merely in its experimental stage; but having now been tried with the greatest success in various collieries all over the country, it may be looked upon as an accepted improvement in coal-working. Its first and most obvious advantage is its absence of flame; but other benefits accrue from its adoption. While the usual mode of blasting with gunpowder or dynamite breaks up the coal into small pieces, the gradual action of the new agent pulls it down in huge blocks. Large coal is, roughly speaking, nearly double the value of small. It is better for the consumer, for the carrier, and particularly for the miner, for

he is paid in many places according to the quantity of large coal which he gets. Ten thousand tons of gunpowder and dynamite are consumed annually in the British collieries. We can now look forward to the time when those dangerous agents will be replaced by the mountain limestone, which can be had in plenty all over the country.

We have lately seen models of the Hallidie Cable Tramway system, by which hilly streets can be mounted as easily as level roads. Highgate Hill, at the foot of which the existing tramways come to a discreet stop, is the first London road upon which the tramway is to be tried; but it has already won favourable opinions and large dividends in San Francisco and Chicago. A travelling wire-rope one inch in diameter, worked by a stationary engine, moves in a groove beneath the roadway. Projecting below the tramcar is a clutch, which, by turning a handle, grips the moving rope, and the car is tugged up hill by the distant engine. The system is worthy of attention, if only for the sake of the poor horses which are urged to drag up hill, burdens that are almost beyond their strength on level ground.

TWO CORBIES.

In a cliff not half a mile from my early northern home, a pair of ravens every summer built their nest. They had been there no one knew how long. The nest was about midway between the top of the cliff and the sea at its base, being placed within a small cave on the face of the precipice, where it was safe from all invaders. The young ones were insatiable; and as their parents liked to see them well fed, it occasionally happened that a hen or duck might be found amissing from the farmyard.

In the same cliff, but nearer the water, and just over the mouth of a cave, a cormorant—or shag, as we call the bird—built her nest on an open shelf, so that we could see the eggs from the top of the cliff. The male raven had seen them too, and resolved to transfer the eggs to his nest. But this did not prove to be so easy as it had looked; for the shag, with her long neck and hooked bill, defended her property to the last. The raven did not like to come to close-quarters with her, but sought to gain the eggs by art and perseverance. He would alight on one end of the shelf, and sidle up to the shag as near as he dared, picking at the outside material of her nest, and thus provoking her to make a dive at him, so as to draw her off the eggs. That gained, he would spring to the other side of the nest to seize an egg. But the shag would wheel round and meet him with open mouth, sometimes ruffling a feather out of him. This went on now and then for several days, till one day the shag got a firm hold of him, and both tumbled over plump into the sea. Unfortunately, the shag lost her hold as they fell into the water, or perhaps she had to let go; and the raven getting on her back, was soon on the wing. The shag by-and-by got up also; but ere she could reach her nest, the raven, drenched as he was, had removed the eggs, not to his nest, but to a short distance, from which he could carry them away at his leisure.

The poor shag had no avenger, and there the matter seemed to terminate. But one night shortly after, a thunder-storm came on from the direction of the sea in front of the cliff. The rain was heavy, and the thunder loud; and next morning the 'corbies' nest with their family had been washed away. I saw the bereaved parents sitting on the top of the cliff, each a picture of desolation, especially the mother-bird.

After a day or two, we began to hear of sheep being destroyed by some strange agency, and then we were told that it was the work of the 'corbies.' This did not seem credible; but more than one person could testify to having seen the birds at the work. One morning, a choice sheep of mine was found destroyed; and I started at once with a gun to shoot the destroyers. But they knew what the weapon meant; and for eight days, early and late, my efforts were unavailing. At last I killed a raven, though whether one of the destructive birds I could not be certain; but from that day, the sheep were safe, and the birds never again seen.

During nine days, these two ravens killed no fewer than thirty strong full-grown sheep. Their mode of action was discovered to be as follows: The mother-bird would fly on to the sheep's face, fixing her claws below the eyes, and seizing the top of the head with her bill, would flap with her wings and scream frightfully. Her mate, ever near, would, when the sheep was so fixed, get on her back and dig a hole through to the kidneys. The sheep, distracted and blinded, would sometimes run over the cliff, sometimes into a ditch, and sometimes fall down exhausted. In no case were the ravens known to leave their victim until life was extinct, snapping the windpipe to that end, when other means failed; and in no case were they known to feed on the sheep's carcass. The loss of their young ones seemed to have excited them to madness, and the sheep seemed to be the only living thing on which they could vent their rage. Had demoniacal possession been a present-day affliction, I should have regarded these ravens as a case in point.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

PORPOISE LACES.

WE have received, says *The Boot and Shoe Trades Journal*, so many requests for enlightenment on this class of goods, that we believe the following result of independent investigation into the matter will be welcomed by most of our readers. It may perhaps cause surprise to some to learn that there is not, and never has been, such a thing as a real porpoise lace; that is to say, a lace cut from the animal so well known on our coasts as the porpoise. The skin of this creature has been found to be perfectly useless when tanned and dressed; but notwithstanding this, the name has obtained universal currency ever since these goods were first introduced into the English market. It is from the skin of the Beluga, or white whale, caught in the northern seas, that what are commercially known as genuine porpoise laces are cut, and,

so far as we know, they cannot, when properly prepared, be surpassed for wear and strength. The imitations are, however, so various, and manufactured so closely to resemble the 'real' article, that they may well deceive every one but an expert in the trade. The majority of these imitations are, we are told, made from calf-skin—both English and French, although some, especially the cheaper kinds, are cut from buffalo hide, kips, &c.

In order to get a good imitation of the smooth surface of the porpoise, the grain of the calf-skin is carefully removed, or split, during the process of dressing, after which a finish of black with a good surface completes the process, when they are ready to be cut up for 'real' porpoise laces. In order, however, that these deceptions may be detected, our contemporary gives various tests, by observing which the purchaser need not be led astray. The chief of these tests are—(1) The genuine article (Beluga laces) is smooth on both sides; while the imitation is rather rough on the flesh side. By taking a lace between the finger and thumb of each hand, about one inch apart, and 'wrinkling' up the grain side, the grain of the calf or other skin will readily be seen, if the lace is an imitation. (2) The substance of a real lace is usually even from end to end; while the imitations are often lumpy or uneven, and one end is nearly always thicker than the other. (3) The real lace is always cut narrow, so as to reduce the cost; while the imitations are generally cut wide, so as to obtain strength. A wide 'porpoise' lace must always, therefore, be regarded with suspicion. (4) There is usually a difficulty in obtaining the imitation laces in the longest lengths, say fifty-four or sixty inches, because the parts of a calf-skin which may be used for this purpose do not usually run that length. (5) One other infallible test is, that the real lace is much more elastic than the imitation.

On the whole, it is suggested as a safer plan to purchase the laces in the 'russet,' as in that state the chances of deception are reduced to a minimum, very ordinary judgment sufficing to distinguish the real from the imitation before they have had the 'blackening' process applied to them.

THE MOONS OF MARS—A STRIKING COINCIDENCE.

The following likeness between scientific results as stated by a practical astronomer, and a happy guess as thrown out long before by a satirical author, may be regarded as a matter of more than merely literary curiosity. In the work of Mr Proctor, entitled, *Flowers of the Sky*, there occurs the following passage with respect to the planet Mars and its moons: 'Astronomers have long examined the neighbourhood of Mars with very powerful telescopes in the hope of discovering Martian moons. But the hope had so thoroughly been abandoned for many years, that the planet had come to be known as "moonless Mars." The construction, however, of a fine telescope which has been mounted at Washington, with an object-glass twenty-six inches in diameter, caused at least American astronomers to hope that after all a Martian moon or two might be discovered. Taking advantage of the exceptionally favourable opportunity presented during the planet's close approach to our earth in the autumn of 1877,

Professor Asaph Hall, of the Washington Observatory, paid special attention to the search for Martian moons. At last, on August 16, 1877, he detected, close by the planet, a faint point of light, which he was unable to examine further at the time—to see if it behaved as a satellite, or as one of the fixed stars. But on the 18th he saw it again, and determined its nature. He also saw another still fainter point of light closer to the planet; and subsequent observations showed that this object also was a satellite. During the next few weeks, both the moons were observed as closely as possible, in fact, whenever weather permitted; and the result is, that we now know the true nature of their paths. The distance of the outer satellite from Mars' centre is about fourteen thousand three hundred miles; from Mars' surface, about twelve thousand miles. The inner travels at a distance of about five thousand seven hundred and fifty miles from the centre, and about three thousand four hundred and fifty miles from the surface of Mars.'

Now read another extract from a book, namely, Dean Swift's *Voyage to Laputa in Gulliver's Travels*, published a century and a half before this discovery was made, and the similarity between the number of the satellites and their distance in the satirical and the scientific treatises is certainly very striking. 'They [the Lilliputians] have likewise,' says Swift, 'discovered two lesser stars, or satellites, which revolve about Mars, whereof the innermost is distant from the centre of the primary planet exactly three of his diameters, and the outermost five; the former revolves in the space of ten hours, and the latter in twenty-one and a half; so that the squares of their periodical times are very near in the same proportion with the cubes of their distance from the centre of Mars; which evidently shows them to be governed by the same law of gravitation that influences the other heavenly bodies.'

THE DIRGE OF THE LEAVES.

Dead or dying,
Our funeral song the winds are sighing!
Dying or dead,
The rain-sodden earth is our chilly bed!
When summer days were long,
The warm air quivered and thrilled with song;
In full green life we waded to the wind,
Now withered and red we are left behind.
All dying or dead,
Our farewell is said,
And we flutter to earth and rot into mould,
Or pave the dark glades with fretwork of gold.
Our death is but change;
Through paths now and strange,
The force that is in us works on to its goal:
For in us, as in all things, moveth a soul
Which dies not, but lives,
And ceaselessly gives
The life-breath of being to that which was dead,
Till the violet springs where the leaves were shed.

J. H. M.

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OXFORD REMINISCENCES.

VACATION.

IN St Martin's, term always ends on a Saturday. A few men may get permission to 'go down' on Friday evening; but it is on Saturday that the college is properly said to 'go down.' There is no public gathering of the tutors and students. Each student goes privately to his tutors and to the Dean; makes with them arrangements about the 'reading' to be done in the vacation; says good-bye; and goes off when and how he likes, provided he go on that day. Unless he have particular permission, he cannot remain in college or in Oxford even for one night. His name has been taken off the kitchen list; and after that, he can neither have anything from the kitchen or buttery, nor can he dine in 'hall.' He says good-bye to his friends; pays his 'scouts;' tips the porters, the messenger, and the boot-cleaner; and goes off in a cab with sensations of his own.

Usually about a dozen men, each by special permission given, remain 'up' in college till Monday. But it is vacation. There are no chapels. The college bells do not ring. In term, there is an early bell at seven o'clock, another at half-past seven, and the chapel bell at eight. These are henceforth silent till term begin again. After Monday, two or three men may still linger in college, each with his own reason for being there; and they disappear one knows not when.

At the end of the October and summer terms there are 'schools,' that is, university examinations. Men in for 'schools,' of course remain in residence so long as they need. Sometimes one solitary man is thus left, with the college all to himself. But that is not often the case. At the end of the Lent term, there are none but private college examinations; and these are held in the last week of term.

The great university examinations come in the summer term. Men who are 'in' for any of these, sometimes think it better to remain in

residence during the whole of the Easter vacation, to read in unbroken quiet; and for this, permission is readily given by the tutors. Such was my own case.

About a dozen men dined in 'hall' on Sunday; on Monday, about half-a-dozen. On Tuesday, we received a message from the cook that dinner would be laid that evening and throughout the vacation at seven o'clock, as usual—in the lower lecture-room in the Fellows' 'quad.' When we came there, we found ourselves to be four only—all staying up to read. I had not made the acquaintance of any one of the other three before this; they were all 'senior' to myself. But thrown together in this way, we had at once a necessary supposed acquaintance. We four undergraduates, we and the college porter at the lodge, had St Martin's all to ourselves. Kaines of Aberdeen was the most 'senior' man; he lived in the New Buildings. Graves and Cole both lived in the front quadrangle. I lived in the back quadrangle, where the library is, and under the library at the foot of the chapel tower. If any of the 'dons' were in residence that vacation, I know not; I saw no sight of one.

The quiet of the place became profound. All day long no foot broke the silence except at breakfast and lunch times, when the 'scout' came in, and was gone again. In the city, like change had come. During the first few days, an unmistakable cab might be seen taking some loiterer with his luggage away to the railway station. But the High was deserted. It was a new sensation. In the morning, no bells rang from chapel towers. The city clocks were like police in the deserted days, and were heard now over half the town. I awoke each morning with feelings such as a schoolboy has when he awakes at home on the first mornings of the holidays. The accustomed sounds were absent. It was not as if you were at home in the country, but as if you were in the solitude of a lonely moated grange in the silent mediæval time.

The weather of that spring-time was very pleasant. The days were bright; or they were

clouded only with an even unmoving fleece of cloud; and the air was mild and sweet. St Martin's is by the meadows. Beyond the green expanse of grass are the elms of Christ Church; and beyond the elms are the Christ Church meadows. Through the trees and across the meadows, you can in the sunlight catch the gleam of the river. There were at that time in Christ Church elms many wood-pigeons. There were rooks also about there; and jackdaws in our chapel tower. From the elms, the sweet voices of the doves came across to St Martin's. The quiet and the sweetness of the place had an influence on us. There was a drowsiness over the world. The inhabitants who toiled had departed; and the place was enjoying its Sabbath. Even the scouts, who are quite unsentimental persons, yielded to that power. It was a Sleepy Hollow; and they were its new Rip Van Winkles. They came late in the morning, went about their work leisurely, and were gone again. The morning sun lit up the tower, and erept down the western side of the quadrangle while the other sides lay in cool shadow. My rooms were on the ground-floor, under the library. One window looked out into the quadrangle. Its stone window-sill is worn by the feet of men who have lived there, and for idleness were used to come in and go out by the window. The back windows and the window of my bedroom looked into the chapel close, where there is smooth-shaven grass under shrubs and young trees. Beyond the close is the ivied wall of the college of St Botolph.

The sunlight came in through the window with the footworn sill, and lit up with a morning light the breakfast-table, always laid when I chose to come to it. But it came not so welcome there; for in his room at breakfast, the coffee-drinking student cared more for the brightness of firelight and an artificial cheerfulness. I sat down to my coffee always with a relish for it; and in St Martin's kitchen they know, or at least knew at that time how to make good coffee. We were the lotus-eaters of the cloister. We seemed to be giving

Our minds and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy:
To muse and dream and live again in memory
With the old faces of our infancy.

At breakfast-time, the college porter came in with the letters, if there were any—though that was not often. He was respectful, monosyllabic. As he came and went on the flags, under the long arched corridors, his steps echoed remotely; and this echoing made the corridors seem longer than they actually were. When he went back, one could not but follow his echoing steps till they died away behind the chapel. When I was breakfasting leisurely, as was usual with me, one sunny morning, I heard steps, and thought it to be the porter's. It proved to be Kaimes, coming through the other corridor at the other end of the library. He came in. He was smoking. With the slight apology that one as briefly waves down, he continued to smoke, and lay down on my sofa. With one leg high in air, and over the knee of the other, he gazed at the ceiling through the little blue smoke-wreath.

'It's a strange place this—in vacation,' he began, after smoking a while in silence.

I assented.

'Do you know,' said he, 'I begin to find it awfully hard to get any reading done.'

'I quite believe you,' was my response.

He was gazing dreamily at the ceiling; and after a time, said in soliloquy: 'Very strange!' So he smoked on, and finished his pipe; and went out and across the quadrangle to his own rooms. Half an hour afterwards I saw him cross my quadrangle in his boating flannels. He called out to me that he was going down the river to Abingdon to-day; he couldn't read.

Each morning I took down my books and read as became me. There was nothing to disturb me. And so the morning passed away. Robert, my scout, came in at one o'clock with my lunch. I put away my books; the morning was over.

In college, the men always have breakfast and lunch in their own rooms. They all dine together in the evening. After lunch, I obeyed my mood. To obey my mood was oftenest to obey my habit, and go off to the upper river. The 'upper river' is that part of the Isis above the city. From St Martin's to the barges on the upper river is a walk of two miles. One hires a boat at the barges. From the barges to Godstow is a row of two miles up the river. On the eastern side is the wide level Port Meadow; on the western side, moist fields shaded by elms, and here and there by the water-courses, by pollard willows; and beyond, the wooded hills of Wytham in Berkshire.

The meadows and banks were already green again; and the trees had a powdering of new foliage. The cuckoo had come. The water had lost its harsh winter colour, and had again the light and gleam of the coming summer.

Godstow Inn, the landing-place of all who ply on the Isis, was deserted. I had the place all my own. I loitered about the landing-place; turned into the idle inn, and tasted the ale in melancholy silence. I wandered across the meadows to Wytham Mill; leaned there on the footbridge day after day, or went round by Wytham village. There were nightingales in the woods of Wytham Hall; but I heard none. The cuckoo I heard always. There was no ill omen for me; for I sought no success in love, and could have no failure. And so, breathing the air of that old-world place, I came back by Godstow Priory, from which the life and glory had departed three centuries gone. I untied my boat, and floated down the river homewards. The west was red; the trees were motionless on the banks; and in the underworld as reflected in the stream the trees also were motionless and the clouds red.

They were indeed haleyon days; not joyous—and yet there was joy; not popular, as the days that come after in the golden summer term; heavenly, for they had for me intimations of a world on the borders of which I became more conscious of living. How quietly alone did I walk home over the smooth meadow to the town. On the meadow, the town boys were already, with insufficient last year's bats, playing irregular cricket. To-day was as yesterday; and to-morrow will become as to-day. Those yesterdays and to-days are all over long ago.

We dined at seven o'clock, in a lecture-room in the dons' quadrangle. Kaimes being the senior man, had an arm-chair at the head of the table.

We had been exiled from 'hall' to dine here—from the hall, with its high open roof of oak, with its wainscot of oak, all round which were the armorial bearings of founders and benefactors, with its portraits of the founder and of the mightiest of the alumni, with its ancient hearth, the dogs of brass, and the mighty embers. We had been exiled from the long oaken tables, from underneath which looked out of the carved oak, heads of mediæval spirits. We had been driven from the lectern at which the junior scholars pronounce the Latin grace—the lectern was a grace in itself. We were in exile, eating our dinner in a lecture-room, at the tutor's writing-table. The lecture-room was felt to be a grievance. In the background was a dreary array of students' examination desks and cane-bottomed chairs, all covered with dust. Through the windows we had an outlook across a little grass plot at blank walls where the kitchens are. But they still sent us the ale in silver pint-pots. We were spared the indignity of drinking college ale from tumblers. Mighty is the ale of St Martin's College in Oxford. Reader, thou hast not quaffed a mightier liquor of malt. It can be drunk from silver pots alone.

We dined leisurely. Kaines was not a man of much conversation; but Cole always had plenty to say. Graves seldom dined with us. He was seldom seen by any one. So the evening darkened in the low-ceiled lecture-room. How much more touching had it been in the gloom and grandeur of the Gothic hall. But it was the same gloom of evening; it made us quiet, perhaps sad. We rose together, and each one went off to his own rooms. They were shadowy enough—lighted only by the red firelight. The scout set the kettle on the fire, set the tea-things on the table, and withdrew for the night. I made tea, and sipped it in the firelight. There was no sound, no voice, only the college clock telling the quarter-hours. Once or twice the bells of Magdalen rang peals, faintly heard down in our dark solitude. Once or twice 'the merry Christ Church bells' chimed their 'one, two, three, four.' Thus was each evening spent—till the time came that I cared to light my lamp and begin to read.

I usually read on till two or three in the morning. Often I did not hear the clocks strike at all. Sometimes, in a pause, I heard the clocks strike twelve. Then, in a pause again, I could hear them strike the hour of two or of three; at which I went off to bed. There was a ghost in the library, they said. I thought of it. But my heart was too sophisticated perhaps to fear or to hear its mysterious tread. One did not always light one's lamp to read for the 'schools.' *Non scholæ sed vitæ.* But it was not for life either. It was sometimes to read in the poets' sweet pages—to read slowly over again the dear familiar poems.

Thus I followed with the inward eye the images of things one after another, till the moving time stood still, and I was left

Sole sitting by the shores of old romance.

There were moods too, in which one must write something—'prose or worse;' letters that were eventually not sent to the post—letters also that were not meant to be sent. And so one left

them unfinished, left the problems unsolved, hopes unrealised—though one felt little of it then. In the early morning, the sun came in through the window with its footworn sill of stone. The student lay thereby asleep—in dreams. The sun looked on the unfinished works of the man! Gentlest of critics! Where in all the world shall be found another so gentle, and yet so truthfully severe withal?

The last week of the vacation came at length. Then entered the men-mechanical bearing the signs of their profession—carpet-beaters, chimney-sweeps, glaziers, cabinet-makers. The scouts were about in college all day long. Our solitude was invaded. No council of war was held by the four inhabitants, but each one independently evacuated the place. I turned out after breakfast, and wandered to Ifley, or to Shotover, or into 'New' or 'John's' gardens—there to read a novel.

I always came back by the High. There too was a beginning of activity. One saw again unmistakable cabs with the first arrivals—harbingers of the coming term. They were men of other colleges, and unknown to me, yet to whom I was bound by a something that gave me involuntary pleasure. There came the anticipation of meeting one's friends, of experiencing again the pleasure of society, and the pleasure of the activity of the golden summer term.

We went to sleep on Friday night. We had read the last page of that chapter of our lives, and turned over the leaf. The Vacation was ended.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

CHAPTER XLVII.—'MISTER,' SAID HIRAM GRAVELY, 'YOU PAID ME LONG AGO. YOU ENLISTED ME WITH THIS HALF-SOVEREIGN.'

IN an hour's time or thereabouts, Mr Search arrived in a frock-coat, tightly buttoned, a slim tall hat, and very accurately fitting boots and gloves. His solemnity and dignity were tremendous. The solemnity remained until he took his leave—the dignity vanished when he crossed the threshold and had once shaken the hostess's hand, and nothing remained of it but that serious cordialness and beautiful sincerity which mark the good American.

In the course of the evening, Mr Search was somehow beguiled into a narration of certain of his experiences of the world and of men and manners. Little Mary sat and worshipped him; and the old lady was filled with wonder and admiration. It appeared that he had been pretty nearly everywhere and seen pretty nearly everything, to the limited experience of his listeners. Mrs Norton confessed him a remarkable man, and was known to say of him afterwards that he spoke English beautifully. It would seem that she regarded it as being a tongue originally foreign to him. Hiram left early, since he had a two miles' walk from the railway station, and reaching the hall, found his employer waiting for him.

'Search,' said Gerard, 'I want to speak to you.' Hiram stood quietly before him; but Gerard arose and began to pace the room with unequal steps. By-and-by he paused, and stood straight before Hiram and looked him in the face. 'I have it on my mind to say something very serious,' he said deliberately. 'It is not easy to do it. Hiram Search—shake hands.' Hiram shook hands, with his gaze fixed on Gerard's. 'You and I know from what you saved me. I can never pay you for it; I shall never want to feel that I have discharged the debt. But will you let me pay you in part?'

They still gripped hands, and looked at each other steadfastly.

'Mister,' said Hiram gravely, 'you paid me long ago. You enlisted me with this half-sovereign, touching it with the thumb and finger of his left hand as it hung from his watch-chain. 'It wa'n't the gift—it was the way of it. I shall take it kindly if you will never speak of that night again.'

'Will you let me try in part to thank you?'

'I'd rather it rested at this,' said Hiram. The grip he gave the hand he held at the last word, told Gerard all he meant.

'That can't be,' said Gerard. 'In the first place, we are not going to part, I hope, but you are out of my service from this hour.'

'No,' said Hiram.

'Yes,' insisted Gerard, with a husky laugh. 'I discharge you. And now, you true friend and honest man, will you do me the very greatest favour I can ask you? Will you go away and get married and be happy, as you deserve to be, and?'—with a hurried shamefacedness which made the gift most moving and manly and gracious—'will you take this as a wedding present from a friend?' ('This' was a strip of paper addressed to a great banking-house in London.)

'Mister,' said Hiram coldly, 'this takes the shine off everything.'

'You can't refuse me,' said Gerard. 'You'll take it to please me. From a friend, Search—from a friend. And to a friend—the best I ever had. Good-night.' He shook Hiram hurriedly by the hand again and left him.

Hiram dug the slip of paper sulkily into his waistcoat pocket and stood for a moment immersed in unpleasant emotions. 'I think it's meaner,' he said at last, rousing himself, 'to refuse to take it, than it would have been not to offer it. I wish there was no such thing as money in the hull wide world. Freezes everything, it does.' But he ended by accepting the gift; and when the natural reluctance he had at first felt was over, he experienced a wonderful glow of pride and satisfaction in it. He packed his traps, and left Lumby Hall next day; but before he went, old Mr Lumby sent for him and bade him good-bye and shook hands with him. Hiram's bewilderment at this unexpected proceeding was not allowed to last.

'My son tells me, Mr Search,' the old man said with quivering dignity, 'that you and he have an unusual tie between you, and that you saved him from a great peril, by unusual courage and resolution. My son is very dear to me, Mr Search, and I am grateful to any man who has done him a service.'

Mrs Lumby thanked him also; and Milly gave him a hearty farewell. The women had some guess as to the nature of Hiram's service, though even they were miles away from comprehending the real value of it; but Gerard's father had no suspicion. The head-groom was a great chum of Hiram's, and pretended business in order to have the fun of a drive with him into Brierham. Their way led them by the road a hungry tramp had travelled once upon a time; and when they reached the brow of a certain little hill, Hiram got out and sat upon a certain stone there, and smoked in solemn silence for a time, and then walked on beside the dogcart to a gate where he paused again. He took the half-sovereign in his hand and looked at it, on the spot where it had first come into his possession; and then, with a heart full of quiet thanksgiving, he climbed back into the dogcart and left those scenes behind him.

Nothing less than a marriage by special license would content him; and he and Mary were married by special license accordingly. And when the ceremony was over, by way of wedding-tour what should the quaint creature do but buy a dogcart and a noble horse, and drive with his happy little wife along every foot of the ground he had wandered over on his way to London! He told her the whole story. He showed her the public-house where he had practised the art of chair-caning. He even went inside and sat upon one of the chairs his hands had earned, and drank a glass of ale so seated; and the landlord, not knowing him from Adam, was mightily obsequious to him. And I do not think there was ever a happier wedding-tour than that simple journey afforded. The September lanes were lovely all the way, and the wedded pair had splendid weather. They drove right into London, and Hiram drank a bottle of champagne with that official of the Omnibus Company who had engaged him and discharged him; and dined regally with his wife at the restaurant where he had served as waiter; and paid a pious pilgrimage to the house where he had first met Mary. Then after a month amid the gaieties of the Metropolis, he sold the horse and the dogcart and went down to Brierham; and on the outskirts of the little town he bought a cottage, and there lived in peace and plenty and homely contentment, not spending more than half his income. At this date, he is the father of a boy, whose name is Gerard, and whose godfather is no less a person than the master of Lumby Hall. Hiram himself is an ardent politician, and is counted a safe draw at any political meeting. He fought the last general election with great valour in behalf of a Radical candidate against Mr Valentine Strange, who secured the seat in spite of him. His invective against the policy of Lord Beaconsfield is said to have been remarkably vivid; and many of the leaders of the *Brierham Morning Star* at that stirring period were believed to have been inspired by him.

Good-bye, Hiram! Rugged, gentle, generous, brave, farewell! Ill as I have drawn you, you may stand as a type, which has been limned better many a time by abler hands, of the splendid manhood of the West—a manhood independent, valorous, and kindly; racy of the virtues of freedom; without fear and without reproach.

In following Hiram Search to say good-bye, I have run too fast forward, and have anticipated somewhat. Come back again for but a little while to scenes and people grown familiar.

LOWER PLANT-LIFE.

POTATO AND SALMON DISEASE.

THAT there exists a literal universe of living beings all unknown to the ordinary observer, has long been a fact familiar to those who work with the microscope. Not merely within the compass of a water-drop do they find varied forms of animal and plant life, but even preying upon low animals and plants, the zoologist and botanist discover still lower forms of life. Of late years, considerable advances have been made in our knowledge of these lower organisms, and the fields of lower plant-life are especially being investigated by busy workers, who are year by year contributing additional curious facts to our botanical store. It may form a suitable inquiry, by way of preface to a brief study of these organisms, to ask: 'What is a lower plant?' Popular conceptions of plant-life will hardly assist us here, because the vast range of lower plants lies outside ordinary ken. But we may fortunately find known plants to lead us to the lower depths of vegetable existence, and to initiate us easily into some of the mysteries of life in its humbler grades.

Botanists are accustomed to divide the plant-world into two great divisions, one being that of the 'Flowering' plants, and the other that of the 'Flowerless' plants. The ordinary flowering plants, which are of higher nature than their flowerless neighbours, are exemplified by the common denizens of our woods, fields, and gardens. The buttercup, lily, wallflower, fuchsia, and pelargonium, are as natural examples of the first group as we could wish to see. The flowerless group is, however, just as familiar to us—at least in its ordinary representatives. Thus the fern, mushroom, moss, and seaweed, never produce the conspicuous flowers seen in common plants, and they illustrate accordingly the flowerless section of the vegetable kingdom. The absence of flowers is further discovered to be associated with a curious life-history. The development of a fern or mushroom, for example, is a very different process from the early growth of a lily or an oak-tree; and as the lower plants at large agree with the fern in the essential details of their development, it may be well to select that familiar plant as an illustration of lower plant-life in a phase intimately related to the subject of this paper. When the back of a fern frond or leaf is examined in the autumn-time, a large number of little brown bodies, called *sori*, are to be noticed. These *sori*, on careful examination by the aid of the microscope, are duly discovered to be each a collection of curious little cases or capsules which may be named 'spore-cases'; the latter, as they exist in a cluster on the back of the frond, being covered by a membrane to which the botanist gives the name of *indusium*. Each spore-case

is similar in structure to its neighbours. It usually consists of an oval, flattened body, around one edge of which runs a very prominent ring, which gives to the whole spore-case somewhat the appearance of a helmet. Inside the spore-case are contained the *spores*. In the early history of the spore-case, it was occupied by a single central cell; but this cell gave origin to others, so that when the case is ripe, it may contain some sixty-four or more spores, which float in a fluid that fills the case. Each spore simply consists of a little case containing a speck of living matter or 'protoplasm.' Under the microscope, no structure or texture is discoverable in the spore; yet, as in the undeveloped egg of the animal, the living matter of the spore contains potentially the substance of a new plant, and is adapted and intended by nature to reproduce, through development, the form of the parent-organism.

When the due season arrives, the spore-cases on the back of the fern-frond are uncovered by the shrivelling of the *indusium* or covering. Then each spore-case, on its own account, is fitted to discharge the spores it contains. The ring already noted as surrounding the case in part, now begins to contract—a result probably due to the drying of the case—and the case itself is thus burst open. The sudden action of bursting, causes the spores to become dispersed or scattered in all directions, and those which fall into damp earth at once commence their new existence. For now, the spores are seen to develop the energies which belong to the 'seeds' of other plants; although, as we shall observe, they differ widely in the results of their germination. When we plant the seed of a pea or bean, for example, the most natural of expectations leads us to hope that a pea or bean will grow up directly therefrom. And in the case of all ordinary plants this expectation is duly realised. Not so in the fern, however; for here, the spore which has found suitable surroundings in the moist earth, gives origin not to a young fern, but to a curious little leaf-like body, known to botanists as a *prothallus*. No trace of the fern is to be seen in the structure of this comparatively simple leaf which has sprung from the spore, and which seems in itself to represent the end of the spore's development.

To complete the cycle of development, and to return naturally to the fern-generation with which we started, requires the further study of the spore and its resulting *prothallus*. It may be meanwhile remarked that, as a rule, the number of spores produced by a single fern is very great. It has thus been calculated that in the male shield-fern (*Aspidium filix mas*), one frond bore ten thousand and sixty-two collections of spore-cases or *sori*, from which no fewer than one hundred millions of ripe spores would be produced. Assuming further, that an ordinary fern-plant would produce ten fronds or leaves, the total number of spores produced by the whole plant would be little short of one thousand millions.

We left the leaf-like *prothallus*, produced from the spore of the fern, springing from the damp earth into which the spore had fallen. The *prothallus* itself is the result of division of the cellular structure of the spore, and it finally

appears before us as a beautiful green leaf, heart-shaped in some fern species, but rounded in others. From its under surface, numerous root-hairs or rootlets arise, and these fix the prothallus in the soil, and likewise absorb nourishment. Now, it is among these root-hairs that certain structures of the highest importance in fern-history begin to be developed. The structures in question correspond in a measure to the *stamens* and *pistil*, or reproductive organs of higher plants. The bodies growing on the fern-prothallus are of two kinds. In one of them are produced numbers of curious little moving bodies, somewhat resembling animalcules; and in the others are produced certain cells, which apparently perform the part of 'seeds.' Thus sooner or later, the contents of the two bodies come together; contact of the little moving bodies of the one set of organs with the little cells of the other takes place. As a result, each cell develops into a little body, which soon begins to show a likeness to a young plant. The whole process which takes place in the prothallus too forcibly suggests the fertilisation of ordinary plants, to escape notice; and just as the young plant arises from the fertilised seed, so the young fern springs from the fertilised cell of the prothallus. Then the young root strikes downwards into the ground, whilst the first leaf of the new fern rises into the air, and the underground stem in its turn becomes developed. The outlines of the fern being thus completed, ordinary growth and multiplication of fronds will convert the young plant into the likeness of the adult, which will produce spore-cases and spores, and thus repeat once again this curious history.

As a rule, each prothallus gives origin to a single fern only, and for a time the prothallus will remain attached to the young fern, as if it was intended by nature to discharge towards the young plant the functions of a nurse; just as the 'seed-leaves' of a higher plant nourish their young. But what is of importance to note in the foregoing history, consists in our plainly recognising the fact that the fern has thus a double development. An 'alternation of generations,' as it is called, is clearly represented in its history. The ordinary fern produces a first 'generation,' consisting of the prothallus and its reproductive organs; and these in turn produce a second 'generation,' consisting of the fern itself. Something similar to this occurs amongst animals, as, for example, amongst the zoophytes, that grow in the likeness of plants, and in crust the oyster-shells. Here, from the fixed zoophyte a jelly-fish-bud is developed. This, like the fern-spore, produces 'eggs' or reproductive elements; and each of these eggs settling down, becomes a zoophyte, just as the cells of the fern-prothallus develop each into a fern-plant.

The history of a fern will be found to assist us in a marked degree in the comprehension of the life-histories of lower plants at large. For nearly all the flowerless plants develop in the fashion of the fern. In a moss, for example, a similar process occurs. As in the fern, the true reproductive bodies grow secondarily either on a thread-like body or on a prothallus. A mushroom, too, has an allied history to the fern. On the 'gills' of the mushroom we find the spores developed, and these give origin to new fungi

either directly or indirectly. The liverworts resemble the ferns in their development; and those well-known flowerless plants the 'horse-tails' or *equisetas* agree with the ferns in having the young plant produced from a prothallus. In a typical seaweed—such as the common bladder-wrack (*Fucus vesiculosus*) of our coasts—the development resembles that of the fern in the production of a young plant through the union of the reproductive elements; there is, however, no prothallus or first generation. But we discover that amongst the flowerless plants very considerable variations in development may exist; the new and young plant being occasionally developed directly, and in other cases indirectly from the parent.

The habits of lower plant-life form of themselves a highly interesting topic. Many species of lower plants are parasitic, for example; and a very large proportion of the skin-diseases that affect man and animals—ringworm being included—are simply due to the habits of lower plants in selecting the skin-tissues for a habitation. The specific disease in each case is to be viewed simply as the result of the plant-growth. Commercially, the lower plants also become interesting when we reflect that a large number of plant-diseases are caused by the growth of these organisms on neighbour-plants, as well as on animals useful to man. Thus a fungus has more than once threatened the commercial prosperity of France, through causing disease in silkworms; and another fungus is the cause of salmon-disease; whilst potato-disease is also the result of lower plant-growth.

The potato-disease may afford a good illustration of those habits of lower plant-life which result in the development of disease in other plants. The *Peronospora infestans*, as the potato-fungus is named, forms as a delicate bloom on the surface of the potato-leaf. When the diseased leaf is examined by the microscope, the fungus itself is seen rising in the form of minute stalks, which protrude through the natural apertures that exist in the leaf. These stalks are jointed, and ultimately become branched, and they arise from a network of threads which lies deep down in the leaf-tissues, and which forms what has been called the 'fungus-turf' or *mycelium*. The ends of the stalks bear little swellings named *sporangia*, and these correspond in a measure, as in name, with the spore-cases of our fern. These spore-cases often fall off entire from the stalks; and occasionally one of these cases throws out a root, which is the beginning of a new plant, and which, finding its way into a potato-leaf, will produce there the characteristic fungus. But more usually, perhaps, the contents of the spore-case—which consist of living protoplasm—undergo a process of division, and when the case bursts, as in the fern, a multitude of little bodies escape. When these bodies gain access to water, they develop a couple of curious little tails, and by means of these tails they swim about as if they were actual animalcules—hence the name of *zoospores* applied to them by botanists. If now, one of these active spores finds its way into the leaf of a potato, it begins to germinate. A tube or root is thrown out from the spore, and this burrows into the leaf-substance. In due time, therefore, it will produce, by simple increase,

the 'fungus-turf' with its stalks issuing from the potato-leaf. When we know that each stalk of the fungus may produce at least one thousand of these little active spores, the reason why potato-disease evinces such a tendency to spread, is not far to seek. For as there may be millions of stalks, there must be countless billions of spores produced by a single diseased plant. But a most interesting observation was brought to light when it was discovered that in addition to the spores or spore-cases borne on the end of the stalks of the potato-fungus, there exist other spore-cases, lying buried in the leaf among the threads of the 'fungus-turf' from which the stalks spring. These latter are called 'resting-spores'; they exist in a state of quiescence; and only develop and spring into vitality after a certain period of quietude. Their office is that of giving origin to new growths of fungi; and from the knowledge of these 'resting-spores,' one may account for outbreaks of this disease after long periods of freedom from its attack. The presumed 'new' disease is, in fact, merely the result of the waking to activity of the 'resting-spores.'

Equally interesting are the phenomena of lower plant-life which the study of the fungus producing the salmon-disease discloses. This latter plant is a near ally of the potato-fungus, and is named *Saprolegnia ferax*. In its most natural situation, the *Saprolegnia* is found growing on the bodies of dead flies which putrefy in water. Another but quite distinct fungus (*Empusa musce*), it may be here noted, may be seen growing on dead flies, and fastening them by its white stalks to window-panes. Recently, the salmon-disease itself has been studied by Professor Huxley, and the observations of this biologist serve to unite in a singularly interesting fashion the life-history of the *Saprolegnia* and the manner in which it is propagated. Seen growing on the salmon, the *Saprolegnia* seems to exist in patches of diseased skin, which, at first affecting only the scaleless parts of the fish, may ultimately come to appear on scale-covered regions. These diseased patches are each a colony of *Saprolegnia*. The result of the fungus-growth is disastrous to the fish; for, sooner or later, the tissues below ulcerate, and a raw, bleeding surface is thus formed, extending in some cases even to the bones. The fish suffers irritation and pain, and dashes about in the water, rubbing itself against stones, and thus increasing the mischief by laying bare the diseased patches. Then finally, the animal, weakened and ill, succumbs to the disorder. It seeks the banks of the river, gets grounded in the shallows, and finally dies exhausted, a victim to the ravages of a life infinitely lower than its own. Ordinarily, the *Saprolegnia* feed and grow upon dead matter; but it would seem that, as in the case of the salmon-fungus, they may choose the living animal as a habitation. The potato-fungus, on the other hand, invariably infests living plants.

The examination of a diseased patch on the body of a salmon shows that it consists of the same network of threads, which, seen in the potato-leaf, are named the 'fungus-turf,' and at the ends of the filaments or threads of which the 'turf' is composed, globular bodies, similar in nature to those of the potato-fungus, are seen. Inside these spore-cases, the little 'spores' or particles of protoplasm are developed; but it is

a curious fact that in the fungus, as it grows on the salmon at least, the spores have not been observed to be provided with the little eyelash-like filaments or tails seen in the spores of the potato-fungus, and named *cilia*. In the ordinary *Saprolegnia*, growing on the dead fly, on the other hand, multitudes of the little moving 'swarm-spores' with tails are seen. If, however, the spores, liberated from the fungus growing on a salmon, gain access to another fish, they will germinate in its skin, produce the 'fungus-turf,' and in a word, develop the disease. We thus note that salmon-disease is of a highly infectious nature; and we further see that it is 'contagious,' and propagated by direct contact between a healthy fish and the germs of the fungus. From the infected salmon, it is easy to infect a dead fly with *Saprolegnia*. In forty-eight hours after a fly had been gently rubbed over a diseased patch on the salmon, the fly was found to be covered with a literal shroud of the white filaments of the fungus. Thus it is argued, that if the fungus can be transferred from the living salmon to the dead fly, it may, conversely, pass from dead flies to the living salmon. The dead insects may thus, in fact, be the original growers of the fungus; and the fishes may thus be infected from the dead and putrefying insect-population of the waters. It is interesting to note that the salmon-fungus will not flourish in salt water. A visit to the sea will cause the fungus to disappear; although, on the return of the fish to the fresh waters, the disease may again make its appearance. This latter result can hardly with safety be attributed to fresh infection. It is regarded as more probable that the fungus has only been stifled and not killed by the salt water. If we bear in mind that the 'resting-spores' of the potato-fungus may reproduce the disease after long periods of quiescence, we cannot fail to see an analogy between the cases of the plant and the animal. The vitality of the *Saprolegnia*, which has only been checked by the salt water, may spring forth anew on the return of the fish to the rivers.

The causes of the salmon-disease have already been indicated in the statement that upon dead insects the fungi flourish naturally. But the causes of their transference to the living salmon form a topic concerning which we have little or no positive information. Such a fact as the existence of a fungus, usually given to live on dead matter, upon a living animal, may perhaps only be accounted for by supposing either that the habits of the fungus have undergone an extension, or that its range and choice of hosts were wider than has been hitherto supposed. Or we have an alternative supposition at hand in the idea, that the fishes which are attacked present some special peculiarity of constitution which lays them open to the attack of the lower plant. Thus the thoroughly healthy fish may be presumed to escape the attack of the fungus, just as the chances of a perfectly healthy person being attacked with infectious disease are small as compared with those incurred by the debilitated body; whilst, on the other hand, the unhealthy or weakly fish may be presumed to be that which, *ceteribus paribus*, will present a fair field for the fungoid attack. The diffusion of the salmon-disease may

readily enough be accounted for on those principles of exceeding fertility which mark the flowerless plants as a whole. Professor Huxley calculates that a single fly may bear one thousand stalks of fungus, each having a spore-case. Allowing each spore-case to contain twenty spores, and that each case develops fully in twelve hours, we shall thus obtain forty thousand spores in a day of twenty-four hours. In the case of a salmon, as many as two hundred and eighty-eight thousand spore-cases may exist in the diseased patches of its body, this amount giving ten million spores as the product of twenty-four hours' vitality; or enough spores to give one such germ to every cubic foot of water in a mass one hundred feet wide, five feet deep, and four miles in length. And when we lastly reflect that over two thousand diseased salmon have been removed from a small river in one season, the favourable conditions under which the salmon-disease is propagated, are by no means difficult to conceive.

The space at our command will not serve for a further enumeration of other points connected with the habits of the lower plants. But enough has been said to show the vast field of economic as well as scientific interest that finds a focus in the lower ranks of the vegetable world. It may form an argument in favour of the practical utility of science-studies, when we discover that a knowledge of the history of those minute pests is the first condition for successfully attempting their extirpation. No greater boon can well be conceived as being conferred upon our race than the knowledge which tends to limit and check a plague or pest, by showing us clearly and distinctly the nature and habitat of the enemy; and but for the aid of science, we might still be hopelessly fighting many a hidden enemy in the dark.

MARJORIE.

AN OLD VIRGINIAN STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

UPON the night of the 20th of December 1781, the solitary figure of a man was buffeting its way against a blinding snow-storm through the silent deserted streets of Alexandria, that quaint, dead, old-world town, which still slumbers upon the banks of the Potomac, in the pleasant state of Virginia. Passing down Broadway and Maiden Lane until he had left the last houses of the town behind him, he met the full blast of the storm as it swept across the river from the distant Maryland hills. Verily, a man must have had important business indeed to have been out upon such a weird, uncanny night; and the Rev. Nahum Bond, a thin, withered, crop-eared young man, of the true old Independent type, was, as a rule, far too sensible of the comforts of life to be exposing himself unless he had important business in hand. He staggered along for a mile until he arrived at the gates of a gaunt, grim old house which stood some way back from the road, and known to the country round as Braddock's. His knock at the door was answered by a negro, who, carefully opening it but an inch or two, pushed the muzzle of a

huge horse-pistol out and asked who was there. The mention of his name, however, had an immediate influence upon the servant, who threw the door wide open, welcomed him with a broad grin, and led the way across the hall to a long, dark, panelled room, dimly lighted by candles stuck in silver sconces, and where were seated around a table a score of gaunt, grave-faced men, who greeted him with a sort of quiet enthusiasm which sounded like distant thunder.

He who occupied the chair at the head of the table—a big, fine-looking man, who wore his own iron-gray hair—rose as Mr Bond entered, and said: 'Better late than never, Brother Nahum. We waited half an hour for you; but as time is short and business is pressing, we considered it best to proceed at once.'

The young divine muttered something about being detained in the town, and sat himself upon the right hand of the president.

A stranger might have been pardoned for imagining that the object of this meeting was some sort of religious celebration, so stern and grave were the faces of its members, added to the presence of a gentleman in holy orders, and of a huge brass-bound Bible amongst the papers and inkstands which were strewn about the table. But its real character was soon made clear by the big man beside the Bible, who rose and said: 'Now that our number is completed by the arrival of one of our most earnest supporters and hearty co-operators, I think I may recapitulate what we have decided upon, for his benefit. The presence of the redcoat tyrants upon Mount Pleasant has become intolerable; and as hitherto Alexandria has not shown herself to be a distinguished atom of the great glorious mass now known throughout the civilised world as the Free and Independent States of North America, we, as representatives of the town, have resolved that the blow shall be struck. We are men; and as men, it does not become us to listen helplessly any longer to the continual complaints which pour in from all sides of the rapacious acts and insolent bearing of these men who call themselves our superiors. What has been done at Lexington; at Concord, at Wilmington, and at fifty other places, can surely be done at Alexandria. And what we propose to do is this: in five days, the Britishers will be celebrating, with their usual profane riotousness and drunkenness, their Christmas festival; and we propose to take advantage of their being off their guard, to drive them out of the place—into the river, into the woods, no matter where, so long as it be away from Alexandria. I am not a man of blood; but upon an occasion like this, it behoves us to be ready to make any sacrifice. They are not cowards, these Britishers; they will fight, and we must be prepared for it; and I take this to be our solemn duty, as much to ourselves as to every one to whom tyranny and oppression are hateful.'

The grim dark faces which had been gradually lighting up during the course of this impassioned oration, now relaxed altogether as the speaker sat down, and a loud murmur of applause arose, and continued until a tall weather-beaten Potomac pilot rose. 'Good words and true, Brother Hood,' he said; 'and I am sure that we all echo them. For myself, I can guarantee a score of river-side lads who will be a match for any twenty Britishers,

grenades, pikes, and all, although none of 'em have ever fired a gun in their lives except at a canvas-back or a jack-rabbit. And I suggest that we make Brother Hood's house, as being away from the town, our magazine and our place of meeting. My friend and I have overhauled the cellars in which the Britisher Braddock used to keep his wines in '55, and we have calculated that we can stow away there at least five hundred muskets, with pikes, swords, and ammunition in proportion. Now about the men we can raise. The Britishers are a hundred and fifty. We ought at least to have three hundred. 'Cause why? We've discipline and practice against us. As I said just now, I'll write down twenty for my share.'

Then one stern man after another rose—all men of wealth and position in the neighbourhood; and in a very few minutes three hundred good men and true were guaranteed for the cause of liberty.

'So far so good, brethren,' said Jeremiah Hood. 'And we must begin at once; for five days is none too much time in which to make our plans and to insure unanimity of movement amongst three hundred men. Let us each take solemn oath, brother Alexandrians, that we will not rest until every Britisher shall have been expelled from Virginian soil.' He raised the Bible to his lips, and passed it to his neighbour, and so on round the table.

It was rather a striking scene: the dark old room, with its Rembrandtesque effects of light and shade; the grim portraits of old Roundhead Hoods with biblical names and severe faces; the candles in the silver sconces just giving sufficient light to intensify the darkness, and to bring out in strong contrast the shades on the earnest faces of the assembly; all heightened by the low murmur of the gruff deep voices, and the ring of steel as each man, raising the Bible to his lips, drew his sword from its scabbard. The religious ordeal was followed by the more convivial ceremony of passing round a huge black jack brimming with brown October; for the night was bitter, and many members of the league had long distances to go. Then they took up their broad-brimmed hats, buckled their cloaks fast around them, and went out, leaving the parson and the host alone.

'Fill your pipe, Nahum,' said Jeremiah, 'and let us speak of our affairs together.'

A fresh log was piled on the fire, the jack was refilled, the pipes were lit, and the two men drew their chairs to the fire. The contrast between them was striking. On the one hand the burly, square form of the Independent farmer, his broad forehead lined with furrows of determination, inherited doubtless from those stern, conscientious forefathers of his who had preferred the solitude of the American backwoods to persecution and intolerance at home; the beard clipped short; and the sturdy development of the head well set off by the absence of a wig. On the other hand, the tall, thin, ungainly, big-boned figure of the parson, whose garb and bearing proclaimed at once the Independent minister, beloved by satirists and lampoonists. The two men sat puffing their pipes and gazing at the fire in silence for some minutes; then the old farmer said: 'I've been so occupied of late with this project, that I have

had no time to talk of the course of matters between you and my daughter Marjorie. I hope you make as rapid progress in her good graces as she does in her studies?'

The parson writhed uneasily in his chair, and then, after the manner peculiar to his time, replied: 'I would that I could say so, Master Hood. If I advanced as quickly in her opinion as she does in Latin and French, I should be the happiest man in America. I fear she will not need a tutor much longer.'

'Well, then,' said Hood, 'she will be needing a husband. Hey?'

'And I dare give it as my opinion,' quoth the minister, looking askance out of his green eyes at the old farmer, 'that the need will be satisfied sooner than people think—sooner than it could be wished for.'

The farmer took his pipe from his mouth, and wheeling himself round, looked keenly at the young man. 'That is a dark speech, Nahum. What does it mean?' he asked.

Nahum preserved silence.

'You don't mean to say,' continued the old man, 'that she has a—a lover, that I know not of?'

Nahum was still silent.

'Now listen, Master Nahum,' resumed Jeremiah; 'we are both men of the world. I put implicit trust in you; I respect you, I admire you; and I almost look upon you as my son. You have been connected with my family all your life, as was your father before you, and there should not be anything between us. Tell me now: has my Marjorie a lover other than you? I shan't be angry with her, although, of course, I shall be bitterly disappointed; for I have for a long time regarded you as the right man, and it would be a long time before I could reconcile myself to any other. I don't want to thwart the wench's inclination; I don't think that is a father's duty, so long as her lover is a true colonial and a good man.—Well; speak out, man!'

'I fear, I very much fear,' said Mr Nahum, 'that she cares very little for me; in fact, she despises and ridicules me. We have wandered together so pleasantly through the paths that lead to Parnassus, that I flattered myself our journey together would only end with our lives. Ah, Master Hood, it makes my heart ache to think that so good, so doting, so noble a father should be so rewarded! But I fear that she is carrying on a clandestine acquaintance with the very man of all others whom you would least care about her knowing. I have seen them together, I have seen them exchange embraces, I—'

'Who is he?' cried the old man sternly. 'Now, I charge you, Nahum, by all our old friendship, to tell me.'

'Lieutenant Harraden of the King's Regiment,' replied the minister.

The old man started as if struck; his dark face grew absolutely black, and his brow contracted so that his eyebrows formed a bristling black hedge across his face. He slapped his hand on his sword-hilt and said in a voice of thunder: 'She—my daughter, dare to give ear to the love-speeches of a king's officer! to hold converse with one of the instruments of our oppression, the trampleers of our crops, the

violators of our hearths, the enemies of our liberty! Rather than she should so far demean herself, I would shoot her!

'Nay, Master Hood,' said Nahum insinuatingly. 'Remember, she is but a young and thoughtless girl; and who ever knew a girl who did not prefer a red coat to a black one, and empty compliments to words of monition? Do not be too hard on her.'

'What sort of young fellow is this Harraden? I know the name somehow. The Harradens used to be neighbours of our family in Kent.'

'He is just as the rest of the king's officers are,' replied Nahum.

'That means to say, I suppose, that he looks upon any wench as fair game; that he drinks his two bottles of wine at a sitting; that he gambles, blasphemes, and fights; is a fop, a bully, and a roisterer? And such a man thinks himself a fit husband for the daughter of Jeremiah Hood, whose grandfather fought in the cause of liberty at Naseby, and three of whose sons are fighting in the glorious cause of liberty in America!'

Nahum had shot his arrow; so he put on his cloak, and wishing the old farmer a sorrowful good-night, went out.

The old man strode up and down the room in angry cogitation for some moments. Then he called the negro Cicero. 'Let Miss Marjorie speak with me,' he said.

The servant, alarmed at the fierce expression upon his master's face, left the room with alacrity; and presently the door opened, and Marjorie appeared—a fresh-coloured, brown-eyed, brown-haired lass, dressed in the sober style prevalent amongst the daughters of Independent families, but with a dash more of coquetry in the shape of a ribbon or two and skirts above the ankles, than was generally sanctioned amongst these stern God-fearing colonists—a pretty, piquant, graceful girl, such as we love to see in old pictures, and to associate with old red-brick houses, standing in many tinted gardens, with smooth-shaven lawns leading down to quiet rivers.

'Did you want me, father?' asked Marjorie, not without a tremor in her voice, as she saw the frown upon Jeremiah Hood's brow, and noted that his hands were tightly clenched behind him, as was his habit when disturbed in spirit.

'Yes, I did,' replied her father, without moving his head towards her. 'I want a few words with you. Shut the door. I hear that you are carrying on a clandestine acquaintance with one of our enemies, with Lieutenant Harraden of the King's Regiment.'—No answer.—'That you, the daughter of Jeremiah Hood, as well known as any man in Virginia as a champion for the rights of the great American people, have so far demeaned yourself as to receive the addresses of a roistering young fop, who will pretend to love you and then desert you; and above all, who wears the livery of the tyrant.'—Marjorie winced a little, but said nothing.—'He is an enemy,' continued her father; 'and all who have dealings with the enemy are traitors to their country and to the holy universal cause of liberty.'

'Who told you this, father?' asked Marjorie.

'Never mind who told me,' replied the farmer. 'I have it upon the very best authority, from

one whose word I have never yet had occasion to doubt.'

'I know—that sneak Nahum Bond,' murmured the girl.

'What's that? what's that?' asked her father, stopping short in his walk.

'I said Nahum Bond was a sneak, and so he is,' repeated Marjorie, who inherited the family spirit, although, as a rule, she was the most demure and peaceful of girls.

'Never—never let me hear you talk of your respected tutor in that way again,' said the angry old man. 'Sneak indeed! That's a new-fangled English word, and sounds very genteelly on the lips of a colonial lady forsooth! I have the very highest respect for Mr Nahum; I respect him for his honesty, for the love he bears me, for his humility, his steadiness, and his thrift. He is the man I had fixed upon as a fitting husband for you.'

'He, my husband, father!' exclaimed Marjorie, terrified. 'Are you in earnest?'

'Ay,' returned Mr Hood sternly. 'Did you ever know me otherwise?'

'Well,' said Marjorie, 'he may be all you think of him, and I hope he is; but if it were only for his being a—a, what I said just now, father, I couldn't love him.'

'But he loves you, Marjorie,' said the old farmer; 'and I can tell you it is something in these days for a girl to say that she is loved by a man of his character and attainments.'

'Yes, I know he does,' said Marjorie; 'he's always paying me clumsy compliments which I hate, and reading love-poetry, and calling me his Dulcinea and his Saccharissa, and I don't know what else besides. A creeping, writhing, yellow-faced creature!'

'At anyrate,' said Mr Hood, 'it is my command that you cease all acquaintance with this Mr Harraden. Return him all his love-letters, for of course you have been writing to each other, and tell him that you cannot keep up a pretence of love with an enemy of your country.'

'I don't pretend, father,' said Marjorie warmly. 'I love him truly and honestly, and I always will; and as to placing Mr Nahum by the side of him, why!—here the damsel tossed her head in the most supreme contempt. 'Ed—I mean Mr Harraden's family have been in Kent since the Conquest. And nobody knows who Mr Nahum is.'

'I don't care about families,' said the farmer. 'I have only to say that I consider Mr Harraden a very unfit person for you to know; and that if I find any further communication passing between you, I shall send you off to your old aunt's in Connecticut, and there you'll have meeting-house going enough to drive all ideas of love out of your head. That is all I have to say.'

Marjorie courtesied and left the room.

Mr Nahum Bond, when he came the next morning to give Marjorie her usual lessons, was uncommonly affable; whilst the attitude of the young lady towards him was distinctly the reverse. The minister could not fail to notice this, so, when the most uncomfortable two hours were ended, he said; 'Miss Hood, how very cold and distant you are to me to-day. May I ask if I have been guilty of anything to offend you?'

'What's the good of your standing there and

asking me if you have offended me,' replied Marjorie, 'when you know very well that you have? I wouldn't be a sneak, if I were you, Mr Bond.'

'A what, Miss Hood!' exclaimed the minister. 'A sneak? Surely a very improper expression to fall from the lips of a young lady at any time, but especially when addressed to one whose life is wrapped up in her happiness and welfare.'

'Then why should you go and tell my father, knowing his sentiments, about my acquaintance with Mr Harraden?' asked Marjorie.

'Your father put the question plainly to me,' replied Nahum, 'and what else could I do? He has suspected it for a long time.'

'Somebody has made him suspicious, then,' said Marjorie, 'for it would never occur to him naturally. I'm ashamed of you, Mr Bond, and I thought better of you.'

'Then try and think better of me again, Miss Hood,' said the young man, 'for I do love you so dearly, and you know that I would not do anything to hurt your feelings or to make you miserable. Can you not love me?'

'Mr Bond,' said Marjorie, assuming a dignified air as well as she could, whilst under the strongest provocation to laugh at the absurd attitude of her wooer, 'I love Mr Harraden; and I do not, I never can love you! Is that not enough?'

A peculiar look came over Nahum's face, such as Marjorie had never seen there before. 'You say, Miss Hood, that you do not and you never can love me,' he said. 'Must I take this answer as final?'

'Quite final,' replied Marjorie; and with a formal courtesy she left the room.

'Final is it?' muttered Mr Nahum as he quitted the house; 'very well then, miss. Your father and all his crew, and you also, shall pay for this decision.'

THE MARRIAGE OF WARDS OF COURT.

THE general superintendence and protective jurisdiction over the persons and property of infants,* which is vested in the Crown, has for a very long period been delegated to the Court of Chancery; and by the Supreme Court of Judicature Act of 1873, is retained for the Chancery division of the High Court of Justice, which takes the direction of their estate, and appoints guardians for their persons only. The young persons thus protected are called 'Wards of Court,' and are constituted such by any writ which relates to them, or on an order for their maintenance being made upon petition or summons, or when money in which they are interested is paid into Court under the Trustee Relief Act of 1847; but unless infants have property, the Court will not exercise its jurisdiction concerning them.

Now, to enable a Chancery ward, whether male or female, to marry, it is necessary to apply to the Court for permission for him or her to do so; which will only be granted on satisfactory evidence that the alliance is a suitable one, and

that a proper marriage settlement will be made; on which being done, an order is drawn up giving the ward liberty to marry.

Formerly, the Court of Chancery declined to sanction the marriage of an infant ward when, on account of his infancy, it was impossible for him to settle his real property: so as to go along with his title, or to provide for his younger children by the settlement. It is provided, however, by the Infants' Settlement Act for 1855, that every male infant of twenty-one years, and every female infant of seventeen years, may upon, or in contemplation of marriage, with the approval of the Court, make a valid and binding settlement of their real or personal estate on their matrimony.

It is considered a very serious contempt of Court to marry a ward without its consent; and the person who does so, as well as those who contribute and assist at the marriage, are liable to be committed to prison; while, if they are peers or peeresses, a sequestration will be ordered against them; but members of the House of Commons will not be privileged from arrest and imprisonment for this offence.

Among the more noteworthy cases of such contempt of Court are those which have occurred last century and the early part of the present one. Of the more flagrant of these cases, is one in which the son of Lord Tankerville's steward, by the contrivance of a nobleman, married a ward of Chancery in the nobleman's Park; for which grievous contempt they, and a parson in the Fleet Prison, who had been bribed by the nobleman with one hundred guineas to marry them, and also a maid-servant, were all sent to, and kept in jail for a fortnight, except the husband, who was detained there for six weeks. In another instance, a woman in mean circumstances and of bad character was lodged in prison for a long period, for marrying a male ward of Court, who was made drunk at an alehouse, and thus entrapped into the marriage. A very flagrant contempt of Court, under exceedingly aggravating circumstances, was committed by a justice of the peace, and a barrister who was formerly a solicitor, by contriving the marriage of a ward, with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, to a school-master in Islington. He was for this serious offence not only sent to prison for five weeks, but was struck out of the Commission as justice of the peace, and prohibited from practising at the bar. In the leading case of *Eyre v. Countess of Shaftesbury*, tried in 1710, before Lord Chancellor Macclesfield, and Lords Commissioners Jekyll, Gilbert, and Raymond, a sequestration was issued against the Countess of Gainsborough, and Lady Shaftesbury, for marrying an infant, who was a peer, to Lady Susannah Noel; which, though not to his disparagement, was done without the consent of the Court or his guardian. In another case, that of *Baseley v. Baseley*, it appears that Mrs Baseley—formerly Miss Anne Wade—was on the death

* Any one under twenty-one years of age is, legally speaking, an infant.

of her father in 1806, heiress to real and personal property of large amount. She was made a ward of Chancery at an early age; in her seventeenth year she was taken away by Mr Baseley, a young gentleman of no property, and who had no previous acquaintance with her or her family; but he obtained possession of her by the aid of her governess and servants, and in gross contempt of Court. He and the young lady went to Scotland, and were married at Gretna Green in 1815; and were shortly afterwards again married in the Episcopal church of Edinburgh. After residing for some time in Scotland, petitions were presented to the Lord Chancellor on their behalf; but his Lordship would not listen to any application until the ward was brought within the jurisdiction of his Court. Shortly afterwards, Mr Baseley presented himself in Court, when Lord Eldon committed him to jail, where he was kept until Mrs Baseley attained her age of twenty-one.

It also appears that if a guardian connives at an intended marriage of a ward, or if there only be an apprehension that the infant will be married unsuitably either by the guardian or by his neglect, the Court will send for the infant, and commit him or her to the care of a proper person or relative, in order to prevent such danger.

The Court may also prevent a female ward from receiving letters, messages, &c., as was done in the case of Leoni, a Jewish singer. If it is doubtful whether a marriage with a ward of the weaker sex is valid, an inquiry may be made to ascertain this, and all intercourse will in the meantime be restrained; and if it be found that the marriage is illegal, a valid one will be ordered. For moral reasons, this course may also be adopted with a male ward.

It is likewise considered an aggravated contempt of Court for a person to marry one of its wards much above him or her in rank. In Herbert's case, last century, it was decided to be a very gross contempt when an infant ward, who possessed twelve hundred pounds a year, upon coming to town from Oxford, was drawn into marrying a common servant-maid older than himself, and with no fortune. In another instance, in which an infant of good family, the representative of a very old baronet, was about to be entrapped into a marriage with a common bricklayer's daughter, the Court would not permit it, and stopped the marriage. In a third case also, it was considered very criminal in all parties who contrived the marriage of a ward of Court with eight thousand pounds to the son of Lord Tankerville's steward, as already referred to. It appears, however, from several other cases, that the possession of a large fortune by the other party would be considered to counterbalance any but a very great inequality of rank; though the Court would not probably allow a man of no property whatever, although of equal family, to marry an infant heiress of rank with very large possessions, notwithstanding the consent of the guardians and all other parties concerned.

The commitment of a person to prison for marrying a ward of Court without its permission, is often made not merely to punish such a con-

tempt of its authority, but to compel him to execute a proper settlement; and in those instances in which there are mitigating circumstances, the husband, in offering to make an approved settlement, may obtain his discharge. It is thought that the modern practice is not to enforce the power of committal, when the contempt is not attended by any aggravating circumstances, but to hold it so as to compel the execution of a proper settlement. In a flagrant case, however, the husband will not be discharged on his offering to do so, until the Court should think he has been sufficiently punished; nor if it has ordered that he should, for procuring the marriage, be indicted for a conspiracy.

As to the terms of the settlement, when there has been no moral wrong, the terms are not influenced by the fact of a mere technical contempt having been committed. In most cases, when wards of Court have been married without its permission, the husbands have been men of straw, who married for the sake of the fortune; and the Court has therefore generally refused to give them any interest in the property; but if they are of equal rank and fortune with their wives, and make a corresponding provision for them out of their own property, it does not appear that the same rule would be adopted. In the case of *Bathurst v. Murray*, in 1802, Lord Eldon directed that the husband should have an annuity out of the property during the matrimonial union, as his lordship mentioned that there could not be much expectation of happiness when the husband had nothing, and the wife had the entire power over the property; but this course appears to have been rarely taken. In the case of *Hodgens v. Hodgson*, tried in 1837, on appeal to the House of Lords from the Court of Chancery in Ireland, Lord Cottenham properly said, that 'when men seek to get advantages for themselves by obtaining possession of wards under the jurisdiction of a Court of Equity, and by so doing are guilty of contempt against its jurisdiction, the Court will seldom if ever permit them to profit by their misconduct, or to enjoy any part of the property, to obtain which has probably been the motive of their proceeding.' The Master of the Rolls, Sir John (afterwards Lord) Romilly, decided to the same effect in the case of *Wade v. Hopkinson* in 1855; and Lord-Justices Knight-Bruce and Turner entertained the same view in the case of *Field v. Moore* in the same year. These judgments are also in accordance with the decision of Sir Edward Sugden, afterwards Lord St Leonards, in *re Anne Walker*, a minor, tried in the Chancery Court of Ireland in 1835. It also appears that the property of a female ward of Court will not be entirely settled upon the issue of her first marriage, although she and her guardians may consent to this being done.

From what has been stated, it is clear that our Court of Equity has adopted very strong and wise measures to discourage the marriage of infants under its protection without its permission; and we need scarcely add that those individuals who do so are held as guilty of a grave breach of morality and etiquette, almost beyond forgiveness. Moreover, such condemnable marriages mostly turn out unhappy ones, of which we have several conspicuous examples,

It is pleasing to know, however, that these unauthorised alliances do not often occur, and appear to have considerably diminished during the last half-century.

OUTWITTING THE BRIGANDS.

It was on such a morning as we fog-nurtured islanders seldom witness at home, that I stood upon the deck of the good steamer *Coromoudouros*, watching the nearing shores of the Piræus, which as all the world knows or should know, is the port of the classic city of Athens. The beautiful unclouded sky; the bright outline of the sun-bathed coast; the air laden with the scent of the distant Hymettus; the far eminence with the grand old Acropolis standing out white and bold in the clear atmosphere; and close at hand the monltering tomb of Themistocles—all combined to arouse such poetic fancies in my mind, that I forgot for the moment the prosaic business upon which I had come. The screaming engine of the busy little railway which carries the traveller from the Piræus to Athens, soon reminded me, however, that I was accredited with a mission from a London Greek firm to their friends in the Attic city; and I was soon whirling over the sacred ground

Where History gives to every rood a page!

We passed the monuments of those doughty champions of the War of Independence, Karaïskakis and Miaulis, and many other objects of interest; and after a ride of three or four miles, I found myself at my destination.

After the first few days, I certainly had a very pleasant time of it, the few hours' work each day acting only as a stimulus to my varied pleasures; and having examined the Acropolis, and lunched by the fallen pillar of Jupiter, seated myself in the ruins of the Pnyx—whence Demosthenes declaimed, and Pericles evolved his plans—I looked around like Alexander, for more worlds to conquer. I thereupon consulted my genial but unwashed host, Kyrie Antonio Pericles Papademetracopoulos—who, although Plato was to him a text-book, and the sayings of Socrates as familiar as the story of Tommy and Harry to an English schoolboy, was always as dirty as a sweep—upon the propriety of betaking myself to where

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea.

For one might as well go to Egypt without visiting the Pyramids, or to Rome without entering St Peter's, as to 'do' Greece and leave Marathon unexplored. And when my host tried to dissuade me by assuring me that a Greek gentleman's ear had been sent a fortnight before by the brigands to his obstinate relatives, to hurry the negotiations for his ransom, it so roused my blood, that I vowed I would go if I returned

as close cropped as an English terrier. So away we started—myself and Themistocles the son of my host, a sallow unshaven youth dirtier than his father—mounted upon two high-spirited donkeys, our revolvers well primed, and our commissariat well stocked.

'Adios Kyrie!' shouted my long-named host as we cantered off.

'Never fear,' I replied, waving my revolver defiantly, and feeling that I should be greatly disappointed if the rascals did not show themselves.

On we went, enjoying the scenery and holding a hybrid conversation—he in broken English, and I in sadly mutilated Greek—until in the excitement of the ride, and the glorious panorama constantly unfolding itself to our view, I entirely forgot that there were such beings as brigands in existence.

'Now,' said I to Themistocles, after a ride of some hours, during which my appetite had become unpleasantly sharpened, 'let us look about for a spot where we can bivouac in comfort.'

We soon found a delightful place, sheltered all round, save where through a small opening, we obtained a view of a charming landscape. Dismounting, and allowing our animals to refresh themselves on the grass, we soon made havoe of the good things we had brought. I was lying upon my back smoking a cigarette after the meal, gazing dreamily at the blue firmament; and being too lazy to rise, had called upon Themistocles to pass the bottle.

'Has the fellow gone to sleep?' thought I, still indisposed to turn my head. 'Themistocles!'

But Themistocles heard me not; and when I raised myself upon my elbow, I saw him standing, as if struck dumb and motionless with fear, staring upon the opening. Instinctively I leaped up and clutched my revolver; but before I took a step, the cause of Themistocles' fear became apparent; and three shaggy forms behind three blunderbusses aimed direct at me, made me fully aware that I was in presence of those scourges of Greece, the brigands! But oh! what a metamorphosis! Where were the natty green jackets with silver buttons, the plumed hats, and the *tout ensemble* of the brigands of my youth, of the operas and the picture-books? Three ragged, disreputable-looking figures, clad in greasy sheepskins and dirty clothes, unkempt, unshaven, took the place of those tinselled heroes, and with stern gestures and muttered threats, ordered us to follow them. My first thought was resistance; but when I showed the slightest signs, the three bell-mouthed muskets were bent towards me; and I felt that the odds were too many, and determining to await events, grimly submitted to be led down the mountain by our unsavoury guides.

At last, after winding through ravines and hollows, across glens and over mountain-paths innumerable, this most unpleasant journey ended by our guides calling a halt as we gained the summit of an eminence surrounded by trees and tall rocks, forming an extraordinary natural fortress. Beneath our feet, in a deep ravine, with seemingly but one outlet, and excellently sheltered by overhanging foliage, was the camp of the brigands; and here we found the rest of the shaggy ruffians—with the exception of one who

stood sentinel—enjoying their siesta with indolent content.

A shrill whistle soon brought the rascals to their feet; and rushing up to meet us, they displayed a dozen of as unfavourable specimens of the human race as could well be found. Seizing our asses by their bridles, they relieved our captors, and led us down the ravine; and having roughly assisted us to dismount, brought us into the presence of the chief of the band.

'Bravo, lads! excellent, excellent!' he shouted, as his sparkling eyes bent upon us in delight; and after a cursory examination, we were conducted, amid the excited gesticulations of the brigands and without undue ceremony, into a dark cavern within the ravine.

'Shiver my maintops!' exclaimed a voice as I groped my way in; 'they might give us sea-room, the vagabonds, and not land us in this lubberly creek; and now they are shoving more craft in to anchor!'

'Haul in, Jack, old chum!' answered another; 'we must make the best of a bad job, mate.'

To say that my heart leaped to my mouth at hearing such unexpected words, and finding myself in the company of my own countrymen, would no more than describe the cheering sensation that thrilled through me.

'What cheer, mates?' I cried in the darkness. Answering exclamations of astonishment greeted my words; and in a few minutes our stories were told; and I learned that my new-found friends were the Captain and supercargo of a ship then lying in the port of the Piræus, who, seeking a like object, had met with a similar fate to my own.

'And now,' said Captain Jack Jenkins, 'how are we to get out of this scrap? If I had Tim and Joe and Black Tom, each with a cutlass and a barking-iron here, we'd soon make a passage, I'd warrant!'

'That's all very well,' said Will Johnson the supercargo; 'but we haven't. If I'd but the opportunity given me, I'd guarantee—'

Whatever the supercargo was about to say was cut short by the advent of two shock-heads at the little opening of our prison, and two harsh voices calling us—as my guide Themistocles informed us—to partake of a feast; for we learned afterwards that the chief, in commemoration of having made such a good haul, had decided to allow us, his prisoners, to partake of the general festivity. But as a preliminary, we had to undergo an examination as to our capability of paying the anticipated ransoms. First, we were relieved of our watches and rings, the Captain using language rather strong for translation to these pages, to the great amusement of his tormentors, who with similar gesticulations to his, endeavoured to imitate the sound of the Captain's words, which of course only added to his wrath and their hilarity.

'You uncombed, dirty-faced vagabonds!' he shouted, 'if I had a few of you aboard the *Annie Martin*, I'd twist your ugly heads over the yard-arm in the twinkling of a jiffy!'

Of course they only laughed the louder at his impotent rage; and I thought it quite as well that they did not understand the language in which he gave it vent.

The operation of stripping us of our valuables

gave me an opportunity to observe the appearance of my companions. Captain Jenkins was the beau-ideal of an English seaman. In age about thirty-five, of a large and robust build, a face broad, manly, and bearded, and limbs such as would delight a sculptor to copy. His height was nearly six feet; and he had an air of command about him which was doubtless bred of his occupation. The supercargo, Will Johnson, was perhaps ten years younger; nearly as tall as his friend, strong and active; and take us altogether—for I am of no mean stature myself—we were three men who, under any circumstances, would be no disgrace to our country; and if any opportunity should arise for an attempt at an escape, I felt certain that we should give as good an account of ourselves as any scratch three, here or there.

Having satisfied themselves of the value of my late father's watch, which I parted from with some emotion, and of the intrinsic worth of the Captain's gold chronometer, as well as the supercargo's watch and diamond ring, we were interrogated, through Themistocles, as to our means. For myself, the name of the firm I was travelling for acted with a talismanic effect upon them, and I was immediately assessed—notwithstanding my protestations—at three hundred pounds. At this price, too, the Captain's freedom was valued; while the unfortunate supercargo—whose business they persisted in confounding with that of owner of the cargo and ship—was unanimously voted to be worth twice our ransom. Having arranged this matter to their own satisfaction, if not to ours, we were told to sit down and enjoy ourselves with what appetite we could muster.

The smell of the roast lamb and the freshly baked meal-cakes, however, soon aroused pleasanter sensations, and dimmed for a time the memory of our griefs; more especially as, under the apparent certainty of obtaining his booty, the chief condescended to be quite patronising towards us, carving the joints himself for us, and delicately handing on the point of a dagger, our several portions. After we had satisfied our hunger with the more solid viands, we were regaled with dried fruits as dessert; and a large jar of a peculiar sherry-coloured but bad-tasting wine of a resinous flavour—which Themistocles described as the common wine of the country—was brought in and set down in the midst of us. This we told them we could not drink; and the chief very generously ordered us a couple of bottles from his own particular store, doubtless the proceeds of a raid upon some well-to-do householder.

Will Johnson after a time managed to ingratiate himself in the favour of our shaggy host and his friends by his genial happy manner and frank bearing, favouring the company with many remarks, which, translated by Themistocles, evidently pleased them. When, too, by sleight-of-hand—in which he was an adept—he performed some simple tricks, and gave them a music-hall song with a rollicking chorus, and wound up with a hornpipe accompanied by the Captain with a pocket-comb and a piece of paper, the general enthusiasm knew no bounds, and the beetle-browed vagabonds laughed till the tears rolled down their cheeks.

Will now became on such excellent terms with them all, that he proceeded to take some

freedoms with them; and when he snatched the horn from the cup-bearer, and installed himself in that official's place, lading the wine out of the wide-mouthed jar and handing it round to the company, his triumph was complete.

'For heaven's sake!' said he as he passed us, 'don't take any of this stuff, and don't drink much of your own.'

'Never fear,' said Jenkins, making a wry face; 'one taste is sufficient.'

And so Will went round with the cup, making a comical remark to this one, and a grimace at that, until the chief—evidently fearing from their hilarity that they were taking too much—ordered them to desist from drinking, and return to their several duties.

Meanwhile, we were sent back into our dungeon, with a sentinel stationed at the opening.

'Not a word,' whispered Will, as we settled down in our prison.—'Here's something, Captain,' he continued, 'that belongs to you.'

'Why,' said the Captain in reply, as Will handed him the article mentioned, 'this is a stopper out of my medicine chest.'

'To be sure it is, Jack,' returned Will; 'and I must apologise for the liberty of taking your laudanum phial; but my confounded back-tooth was so painful on board the ship last night, that I got up and took it, and luckily forgot to return it this morning. You must debit me with the bottle and its contents, for I dropped them both into the vagabonds' wine-jar!'

'What!' we all exclaimed in a breath.

'Now, stop your clappers!' continued the supereargo.—'Jack, you know I'm not bad at sleight-of-hand tricks. Well, in the first place, having contrived to secrete the bottle while the blackguards were relieving me of my valuables, and then having attained the position of waiter, what was easier than to wriggle the bottle down my sleeve, whip out the stopper, and drop the lot into their swipes; giving the bottle a crack and stirring the laudanum up, every time I dipped the horn into it!'

'Bravo, Will!' cried the Captain, seizing his hand and giving it a hearty shake. 'If that's the case, we're safe; for the black-faced rascals won't wake up for a dozen hours I'll be bound. There! our guard has dropped off already!'

And sure enough, the drowsy ruffian had planted himself right across the opening and was snoring loudly.

'Now for it!' cried the impetuous Jack Jenkins, rising.

'Hold hard!' said Will. 'Let them get well off.'

So, settling ourselves down for half an hour, we talked the matter over. At the end of this time, we sent the trembling Themistocles to see how things were outside; and after peeping over the prostrate sentinel, he gave us to understand that all were sleeping except three, and they were retiring to the farther end of the ravine, and would in a minute be out of sight.

'Capital!' said Will, with suppressed excitement. 'Now, each take a pistol and a cutlass from the fellows, and follow me.'

One after the other we stepped across the sleeping brigand at the entrance, Will relieving him of his pistol, dirk, and blunderbuss; while the Captain and I stood by ready to give him

his quietus at the slightest sign of his waking. Then the four of us, gliding like ghosts, assisted ourselves to whatever weapons we could most easily lay hands upon; and as Themistocles was not of much use for fighting, we gave him the bag containing our valuables—which we found by the side of the sleeping chief—as well as several spare pistols, to carry. Picking our way without speaking a word, we advanced towards the open end of the ravine, and just as we turned round a jutting piece of rock, we saw the three sentinels, seemingly in earnest conversation.

'Halt!' whispered Will. 'Now for a rush!' and each singling out his man and clutching his rifle by the barrel—for we avoided the noise of shooting—we sprang forward. Almost simultaneously, and before the enemy had time to observe us, we were upon them, and three rifle-stocks descended upon three shock heads with such force, that two of the fellows dropped like stones. The stock of my rifle glanced off the hard head of my antagonist and crashed against the rock. With a stifled cry, he turned; but in an instant my hand was upon his throat, and the sound died in his gullet; while with the strength of desperation, I dashed his head against the wall-like rock; and after a struggle—in which he wounded me with his dagger—he fell from my grasp, apparently lifeless.

'Now,' said the Captain, 'where are the donkeys?—Come, Greeky!' he cried to Themistocles; 'bear a hand;' and looking around, we espied our four animals just as we left them, but with a brigand sitting by them. Here was an unlooked-for rencontre! He was fully a hundred yards off, and to get at him, we should have to cross a small plateau.

'Leave him to me!' cried Jenkins, preparing to rush forward. But under the advice of the supereargo, he stopped. We could have picked him off easily, but dared not for the noise of the rifles.

'Hang it!' impatiently muttered Jenkins, 'we shall be trapped again, after all;' and without further parley, the impetuous fellow started off, running on the tips of his toes, with a drawn cutlass in one hand and a pistol in the other. Just as he was within a few yards of the brigand, the latter turned round, and seeing how matters stood, made for his rifle, which was leaning against a tree a few feet off; but a revolver hurled deftly by Will Johnson—for we had all followed—catching him directly in the face, so effectually stopped his progress, that he fell stunned to the ground.

'You persist in doing all the work,' said Jenkins as we came up to him. 'But quick, lads; off we go!' and in a moment we were on our asses, and under the guidance of our Greek companion, were making with break-neck speed for Athens. Up hill, down dale, on we went for a couple of hours without stopping or meeting a human being; then, just as we were about to cross the summit of a mountain at which we had arrived, a harmless-looking peasant wished us 'good-day,' and was about to pass on.

'Seize him!' cried Themistocles; 'he's a scout.'

So seize him we did, for caution's sake; and as there were no trees near, we tied his hands and legs together, and left him begging for

mercy. But there was no mercy in us, more especially as Themistocles explained that there was such a curious and mysterious connection between the brigands and villagers, that it was by no means unlikely—had we allowed him to go free—he would have hied to the nearest village and roused a swarm of semi-brigands about us.

Having travelled for four hours, and as our asses could scarcely get along for fatigue, we called a halt; and after resting ourselves and watering our animals, we continued our journey until, late at night, we reached Athens, where, round the hospitable board of our host, we soon forgot our troubles.

CURIOUS INSTANCE OF MENTAL PRESCIENCE.

AN article in *Chambers's Journal* (No. 947) on 'Curiosities of Mental Prescience' has brought to my recollection an incident which happened to me upwards of twenty years ago. It produced a great impression on my mind at the time, and shows that there is some mental law in operation that is as yet inexplicable. But I will let the facts speak for themselves.

At the time I have alluded to, I attended a church among the members of which a certain question was then causing a great amount of excitement. Feeling ran very high, and meetings were called time after time to discuss the matter, which touched upon the acts of certain officials. An anti-official party was formed; and I took an active part in its movements. I thought a great injustice was being done, and I did all I could to right matters. Well, a meeting was called one evening in a room not connected with the church, and we malcontents were to be present to discuss the matters in dispute. Our clergyman was exceedingly anxious that party feeling should not run so high as to cause any rupture in the church. That anxiety on his part was put very strongly to me a few hours before the meeting, at which he was not expected to be present, hence I was exceedingly anxious that we should not do anything to give him, personally, any offence. I attended the meeting, having had to hurry from my business to be there in time, and had thus been six or seven hours without food. I mention this, as it may possibly have some bearing on my mental and nervous condition at the time.

The meeting was an exciting one. I spoke in it. I know I had an excruciating headache; and when I sat down, another speaker followed. I listened to him for a minute or two, when, such was the pain in my head, that I rested it on my hand, and my elbow on my knee, and pressed my aching brow. I at once fell into a semi-unconscious state, or a kind of half-dream, call it what you like. I was perfectly unconscious of what was going on around me, though I felt I was in the meeting. In that state I saw, as in a vision, our clergyman walk in, and of course his presence under such circumstances created some little excitement. He told us why he had come, and indeed spoke, as I thought, for about a quarter of an hour, and then bowed himself out. On that, I again as it were came to myself.

Now, to show that I had only been an inap-

preciably small time in that semi-unconscious state, I may mention that I found that the same speaker was on his legs and that I had not lost a single sentence of what he said. Of course, up to that time our minister had not been in. But the marvellous part of the story is, that in a very short time afterwards, and whilst the same speaker was still addressing the meeting, the minister came in just as I had seen him in my 'vision,' and delivered precisely the same speech as I had heard him deliver when I was in the state described, and went out exactly as I had seen him do before!

I don't attempt to offer any explanation of the fact, but give it as a curious instance of mental prescience.

TEL-EL-KEBIR.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1882.

Our forces were massed in the dead of the night,
Each man carried nought but was needful in fight,
Accoutred and ready, they sought for repose;
Two hours were thus spent, when they silently rose.

No bugle-notes rang on the calm cloudless air;
A whisper was passed for the march to prepare:
In silence they moved o'er the dark trackless sand,
Took their course by the stars, and with compass in hand

Each regiment felt for the neighbouring line,
And kept its position without sound or sign:
Thus weird-like the army still held on its way,
But halted awhile for the break of the day.

The order was passed: 'Let no man fire a shot,
Until at the trenches the first line has got;
Then rush with a cheer, and the bayonet wield,
The Islamite horde must then speedily yield.'

Sir Garnot's design was a consummate plan;
His soldiers he knew he could trust to a man;
And thus when the muttered command passed around,
His heroes dashed forward with joy at the sound.

Though met with a shower of bullets like hail,
No obstacle could o'er their ardour prevail;
They leapt o'er the ditches and swarmed up the slope,
Dropped inside the works, with the rebels to cope.

No race of the East but must stagger and reel
When charged hand to hand with the British cold steel.
Few minutes sufficed from the first of the rush
The strength of proud Arabi's legions to crush.

The Highland Brigade bore the brunt of the fray;
Their ranks were more thinned than the rest on that day;
While the cavalry swopt o'er the mass in retreat,
And cut down their hundreds the rout to complete.

The Indian contingent went straight on ahead,
Till Tantah's old thoroughfares rang to their tread.
The campaign was won; and ere next sun had set,
In Cairo the victors triumphantly met.

All arms of the service have valiantly fought,
Fresh laurels to history's pages are brought;
Enshrined on our flag a new name shall appear,
Recalling the victory at Tel-el-Kebir.

LXXX, November 1882.

W. D.

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VOLCANOES.

THE phenomena of volcanoes are among the most imposing and awe-inspiring within the circuit of natural influences. This is due in great part to the sense of utter helplessness that fills the mind of the observer in view of stupendous natural forces which he is powerless to check, and of tremendous agencies of destruction which it is impossible for him either to resist or control. Moreover, the apparent irregularity of the eruptions which take place from time to time in the chief centres of volcanic action, is such as to stimulate his curiosity as powerfully as they excite his fears; and thus the phenomena, and their attendant manifestations of irresistible and destructive energy, have rendered the 'burning mountain' in all ages and among all peoples an object of unceasing wonder and apprehension. In the more poetic ages of the world, when men were disposed to personify those powers in nature that were beyond their comprehension or control, such volcanic outbreaks were attributed to causes in keeping with the modes of thought which then prevailed. The volcanoes in the Mediterranean area were accounted for, in the picturesque mythology of the time, by supposing that the gods were there engaged in conflict or toil; the mountain of Vulcano, or Volcano, in the Lipari Islands, being appropriated as the forge of the Greek Hephæstus and his Roman representative Vulcan—and the name thus came to be applied to all similar phenomena. Etna, again, was regarded as formed by the mountains which the vengeful Zeus had heaped over the rebellious Typhon, its periodically recurrent eruptions being ascribed to the tremendous struggles by which the buried giant sought to free himself from the superincumbent mass. But such poetical explanations have long ceased to have weight among mankind, and we now seek for a solution of those wonderful problems of nature in a manner more in keeping with the scientific spirit that is every day removing us farther and farther from the area of mythological influences.

Within the last thirty years, volcanoes have been made the subject of close and scientific observation, and the questions that still remain unsolved are now confined within a comparatively narrow area. The chief contribution which has ever perhaps been made to the scientific elucidation of the subject, is to be found in a volume by Professor Judd, entitled, *Volcanoes: What they are, and What they Teach* (London: Kegan Paul & Co.). This volume will serve as the basis of some observations, in which we shall endeavour to sum up the extent of present knowledge on this interesting subject.

A volcano is generally described as 'a burning mountain, from the summit of which issue smoke and flames.' This definition Mr Judd takes exception to, both as a whole and in its individual propositions. In the first place, the action which takes place at volcanoes is not external 'burning,' or combustion, and bears, indeed, no relation whatever to that well-known process. Nor are volcanoes necessarily 'mountains' at all; essentially, they are just the reverse—namely, holes in the earth's crust, by means of which a communication is kept up between the surface and the interior of our globe. The mountains that generally exist at centres of volcanic activity, are simply the gathered materials thrown out of these holes, and have not therefore to do with the causes, but with the consequences of volcanic action. Neither is this action confined to the 'summits' of mountains, for it as frequently occurs on their sides or at their base; while what is called 'smoke' is in reality steam or watery vapour; and what is described as 'flames' is nothing more than the glowing light of the molten matter in the crater reflected from these vapour clouds.

Such, then, being some of the popular misconceptions of the causes and character of volcanic action, a more accurate conception may be obtained of what volcanoes are, if we have an opportunity of hearing from eye-witnesses how they are made. An interesting example of this operation has been afforded within the modern

historical period. On the Bay of Naples, and about eighteen miles' distance from Mount Vesuvius, is a conical hill four hundred and forty feet in height, and covering an area more than half a mile in diameter. This is called Monte Nuovo, or the 'New Mountain,' and came into existence less than three hundred and fifty years ago, its site having been anciently occupied in part by the Lucrine Lake. This continued till 1638, when the 'New Mountain' was formed; and the facts attending its formation have been conclusively proved. For more than two years previously, the country around was affected by earthquakes, which gradually increased in intensity, and attained their climax in September of the year last mentioned.

On the 27th and 28th of that month, these earthquake shocks are said to have been felt almost continuously day and night. About eight o'clock in the morning of the 29th, a depression of the ground was noticed on the site of the future hill; and from this depression, water, which was at first cold and afterwards tepid, began to issue. Four hours afterwards the ground was seen to swell up and open, forming a gaping fissure, within which incandescent matter was visible. From this fissure numerous masses of stone, some of them "as large as an ox," with vast quantities of pumice and mud, were thrown up to a great height, and these falling upon the sides of the vent, formed a great mound. This violent ejection of materials continued for two days and nights, and on the third day a very considerable hill was seen to have been built up by the falling fragments; and this hill was climbed by some of the eye-witnesses of the eruption. The next day the ejections were resumed, and many persons who had ventured on the hill were injured, and several killed by the falling stones. The later ejections were, however, of less violence than the earlier ones, and seem to have died out on the seventh or eighth day after the beginning of the outburst. The great mass of this considerable hill would appear, according to the accounts which have been preserved, to have been built up by the materials which were ejected during two days and nights. This volcano is now quiescent, and the slopes of the hill are covered with thickets of stone-pine.

The circumstances attending the formation of this remarkable hill may be regarded as typical of what has taken place in the case of probably every centre of volcanic action that exists. The presence of internal disturbing agencies is first notified by successive earthquake shocks, which result in the partial disruption of the surface, and the opening out of a fissure, from which, along with heated water or steam, masses of rock, mud, and other debris, are ejected. These materials, as they fall back, gradually accumulate around the opening, until what is called a crater is formed. Within this crater, incandescent matter is visible, which from time to time bursts or boils up with great eruptive force, sending forth immense volumes of heated vapour, and ejecting fresh masses of loose materials, which, as they fall back upon the newly-formed conical hill, and roll down its sides till they reach the angle of rest, gradually add to its height and swell out its bulk. Thus, what had been but a short time before a level valley, or even, as in the case

of Monte Nuovo, a lake, is now an elevated hill, with all the strange and striking characteristics of a 'burning mountain.'

In the early period of a volcano's existence, and under normal atmospheric conditions, the cone round the crater is built up pretty equally on all sides, whereby the opening of the volcano continues to retain its original central position. But there are various agencies by which the shape of the volcanic cone is modified and changed. For instance, in the case of high mountains, such as Vesuvius, the combined weight and pressure of the material that surrounds or falls back into the opening of the crater has a tendency to plug up the opening altogether, in which event the subterranean forces frequently burst out by an opening which they make for themselves in the lower slopes of the hill. When this occurs, the same phenomena happen as before. The debris thrown out falls back round the new-made opening or fissure, and a twin volcano—or 'parasitic cone,' as it is termed—is gradually formed. Again, when the volcano, either during an eruption, or from its geographical position, is exposed to strong winds blowing persistently in one direction, the greater portion of the dust and debris ejected into the air is carried to leeward, and thus the cone is built up with the crater on one side, the summit of the cone so formed being frequently much higher than the crater, and in a sense overlooking it. Of perfect cones, those of Cotopaxi, nineteen thousand six hundred feet in height, and Citlaltepetl, seventeen thousand three hundred and seventy feet, are striking examples; though in each case we may take it that successive periods of eruption alternating with periods of quiescence have frequently changed both the size and the shape of the respective craters.

In describing the origin of Monte Nuovo, we have seen the process by which volcanoes are formed; and in Mr Judd's account of what he saw taking place in the crater of Stromboli, we gain a corresponding knowledge of how volcanoes, after being formed, continue to act. Stromboli is one of the oldest volcanoes in the Mediterranean Sea, and is peculiar in this respect, that for at least two thousand years it has been in a constant and regular, but not in a violent or dangerous state of activity; hence it is possible for observers, without any overwhelming sense of danger, to watch for hours together the series of operations going on within the crater. Our author, in 1874, made a careful examination and sketch of this volcano. The island of which it consists is of rudely circular outline, and the volcano rises in a conical form to the height of three thousand and ninety feet above the level of the Mediterranean. Stromboli is one of those volcanoes in which the crater is not on the summit, but on the side of the mountain some distance below the summit. Viewed at night-time, it presents a very striking and singular spectacle. The mountain, owing to its great elevation, is visible over an area having a radius of more than a hundred miles; and as it bursts out intermittently into a broad flash, or glare of light, then sinks down, only in a few minutes to flash out afresh, it has been called 'the Lighthouse of the Mediterranean.'

'If we climb up,' says Mr Judd, 'to this scene of volcanic activity, we shall be able to watch narrowly the operations which are going on there. On the morning of the 24th of April, 1874, I paid a visit to this interesting spot in order to get a near view of what was taking place. On reaching a point upon the side of the Sciarra from which the crater was in full view before me, I witnessed an outburst which then took place. Before the outburst, numerous light curling wreaths of vapour were seen ascending from fissures on the sides and bottom of the crater. Suddenly, and without the slightest warning, a sound was heard like that produced when a locomotive blows off its steam at a railway station; a great volume of watery vapour was at the same time thrown violently into the atmosphere, and with it there were hurled upwards a number of dark fragments, which rose to the height of four hundred or five hundred feet above the crater, describing curves in their course, and then falling back upon the mountain. Most of these fragments tumbled into the crater with a loud, rattling noise; but some of them fell outside the crater; and a few rolled down the steep slope of the Sciarra into the sea. Some of these falling fragments were found to be still hot and glowing, and in a semi-molten condition, so that they readily received the impression of a coin thrust into them.'

There is a still higher spot on the upper side of the crater from which the spectator can look down upon the bottom of the crater itself and see what is going on there; and when the wind is blowing from the onlooker towards the crater, he may sit for hours watching the wonderful scene displayed before him. 'The black slaggy bottom of the crater is seen to be traversed by many fissures or cracks, from most of which curling jets of vapour issue quietly, and gradually mingle with and disappear in the atmosphere. But besides these smaller cracks at the bottom of the crater, several larger openings are seen, which vary in number and position at different periods.' These larger apertures may be divided into three classes: (1) Those that emit steam in loud snorting puffs, like a locomotive engine; (2) those from which masses of molten material are seen welling out, and sometimes flowing outside the crater in a lava-stream; and (3) those within the walls of which a viscid or semi-liquid substance is seen slowly heaving up and down. As we watch the seething mass in this third class of apertures, 'the agitation within it is seen to increase gradually, and at last a gigantic bubble is formed, which violently bursts, when a great rush of steam takes place, carrying fragments of the scum-like surface of the liquid high into the atmosphere.'

'If we visit the crater by night,' continues our author, 'the appearances presented are found to be still more striking and suggestive. The smaller cracks and larger openings glow with a ruddy light. The liquid matter is seen to be red or even white hot, while the scum or crust which forms upon it is of a dull red colour. Every time a bubble bursts and the crust is broken up by the escape of steam, a fresh glowing surface of the incandescent material is exposed. If at these moments we look up at the vapour-cloud covering the mountain, we shall at once understand the

cause of the singular appearance presented by Stromboli when viewed from a distance at night; for the great masses of vapour are seen to be lit up with a vivid, ruddy glow, like that produced when an engine-driver opens the door of the furnace and illuminates the stream of vapour issuing from the funnel of his locomotive.' A more vivid picture could scarcely be drawn of the process of volcanic action, or one conveying to the reader's mind a better antidote for the misconceptions that prevail regarding it.

The three essential conditions on which the production of volcanic phenomena seems, in Mr Judd's opinion, to depend, are the following: 'First, the existence of certain apertures or cracks communicating between the interior and the surface of the earth; secondly, the presence of matter in a highly heated condition beneath the surface; and thirdly, the existence of great quantities of water imprisoned in the subterranean regions— which water, escaping as steam, gives rise to all those active phenomena we have been describing.' The questions involved in the second and third of these conditions—namely, how matter in a highly heated condition comes to be found beneath the surface of the earth, and how the additional presence of water there is to be accounted for—have already been treated by us in an article entitled, 'Is the Interior of the Earth Molten or Solid?' (No. 943), and need not therefore be further referred to in this place.

Regarding the first of the above three conditions of volcanic phenomena—cracks or fissures in the earth's crust—Professor Judd, in the work in question, has added largely to the existing knowledge on the subject. He has contributed also not only to our knowledge of the causes and operations of volcanic phenomena, but to what we know of their uses in the economy of the natural world. The materials ejected from volcanoes during an eruption are not, as many may think, a wholly useless collection of debris. On the other hand, much of what is thus thrown out is of considerable commercial value. The volatile substances issuing from volcanic vents are at once deposited when they come into contact with the cool atmosphere; others form new compounds with one another and the constituents of the atmosphere; while others, again, combine with the materials of the surrounding rocks and form fresh chemical compounds with some of their ingredients. The deposits which are thus continually accumulating on the sides and lips of volcanic fissures, consist of sulphates, chlorides, sal-ammoniac, sulphur, &c. At Vulcano, regular chemical works have been established by a Scotch firm in the crater of the volcano, a great number of workmen being engaged in collecting the materials which are deposited around the fissures, and which are renewed by the volcanic action almost as soon as they are removed. This work, as one may readily suppose, is not at all times carried on with safety; for in 1873, a sudden outburst of activity within the crater took place before the workmen could escape, and several of them were severely burned by the explosions.

As the knowledge of natural phenomena and natural products extends, man is day by day widening the area of his operations, and allowing a smaller and smaller proportion of those products to go to waste; yet it may not be without

a feeling of surprise that many will learn, that even the seeming refuse of volcanoes is rich in constituents that are at once valuable and useful.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—'LET ME STAY WITH YOU,'
PLEADED MILLY. 'I SHALL NEVER MARRY.'

MR JOLLY bore his daughter's death with that Spartan fortitude which belongs to the great race of Egotists. I will not say he did not grieve; but he talked too much of his bereavement for my simple fancy, and managed his handkerchief too artistically as he stood beside the grave. There is a sort of man who will mountebank grief at a funeral as he will mountebank joy at a wedding and patriotic indignation at an election meeting; who, if he shed tears, must needs do it with a grace, and dances you an oratorical minuet over the slain in a Roumelian atrocity. Of one sincerity of regret Mr Jolly was guilty. His son-in-law had no filial yearnings towards him, and did not beg him to make his house his home. You meet Mr Jolly in life now and then, as well as in novels, and I cannot conceive of him anywhere as being other than a bore. I fear that sermons are wasted upon him, and that portraiture is a vain art for him. Meeting his reflection in these pages, he may say—I think I hear him—that it is a most unfaithful and uncharacteristic sketch, and not in the least like anybody.

There are few wounds from which the human heart will not recover, if they are inflicted in its youth. And perhaps the best way of curing such wounds is to leave them to their own healing, and to do whatever plain duties lie before you. This was Val Strange's cure, and it succeeded as well as could be hoped. From that wild scene on Welbeck Head, he went back to such work as he could find, and then and there left the Primrose Way for good. He has not yet lived down the beliefs his neighbours entertained about the callousness of his conduct towards his young wife and his hardness at her death. And so true are the world's verdicts and so well worth listening to, that Mr Jolly passes as a model of paternal grief and tender fatherly remembrance of the dead, whilst Val is still spoken of as having exhibited himself as a monster of no feeling. It strikes some people as a curious thing that so dour and hard a man as Mr Gerard Lumby was believed to be should ever have overlooked and forgiven the wrong Val Strange did against him. And seeing that the two men, though they meet but seldom, are singularly attached to each other, these wisecracks conclude that Gerard has but a shallow sort of nature after all, and is incapable of any very strong and enduring emotion. But these are mainly people who make a great point of their pretensions to 'read character.'

Whatever may be thought still of Val's relations with his beautiful wife, there are no mistakes made about his love for his little daughter. He

loves her with a haunting remorseful tenderness, a sad and deep affection; and the common people say that little Constance is the very apple of Squire Strange's eye.

Aunt Lucretia inoculated Reginald only too easily with her own beliefs, and the little man for a long time hated Val with a mingled scorn and loathing which were at times almost too much to bear. But he threw himself on the other hand enthusiastically on Gerard's side, and made a hero of him, and little as he knew, made some near guesses at the sort of storms which had passed through his soul. This intimacy with Gerard cost him dear, and yet gave him a sweet remembrance which I think will last his lifetime. He hung about Lumby Hall a good deal in those days, and a singular change was noticed in him.

'I never had any feminine society, Mrs Lumby,' he said on one occasion. 'That is, I never enjoyed any lengthened period of home-life, don't you know, madam? and I feel the loss—the deprivation deeply. Now, it's a fact recognised even by the ancients, that female associations soften the manners. I can't say I think a lot of the ancients, as a rule, though they do make such a fuss of them at school and at the 'varsities; but they were certainly right there; don't you think so?' And so the bald-headed little man fluttered in conversation, in a manner altogether new and noticeable. He was nervous—he was hurried and flurried in his speech—and yet he would talk, and was so remarkably eager to be agreeable and complimentary, that he ran some risk of becoming a nuisance.

During one of Reginald's visits to Lumby Hall, two years after his sister's death, Gerard, unexpectedly entering his bedroom, beheld a sight which shook his sides with mirth. We suffer, and we think we shall never laugh more; but the days and the months go by, and the burden of grief is somehow lightened, and then comes a jest somewhere, and we laugh again as heartily as ever. Only perhaps the laughter leaves us a little sadder than before, and acts as though it were a signal to call the shadow back again. The good little Reginald, when Gerard came unexpectedly upon him, was in his shirt-sleeves, and was hard at work with some gruesome gluey substance out of a bottle, polishing his baldness with both hands, as a French-polisher works at mahogany. And, there on the table before him was spread each individual device of that great fraternity of knowing ones who gift the bald with liquid hair-seed at seven-and-six per bottle; a score of them, and nearly all unstopped. Taking in the whole situation at a glance, Gerard fell against the door-post and lifted up his voice and screamed and laughed outrageously; and the little man, with his hands still at his head, turned round, and stared at him with a visage so rueful and amazed, that mirth became almost heroic in intensity. He smiled feebly at length, and went on polishing with a look of shame.

'It's all very well to laugh,' he said, when Gerard had done laughing, and in a condition of infantine weakness, was wiping his eyes, 'you curled and golden young Anak. But how would you feel if you were a small cove like me? five feet four, and as bald as a billiard-ball! I don't believe any of 'em are of any use,' he added

piteously. 'And this one'—indicating the bottle whose contents he had last employed—'is so awfully sticky and sweet, that whenever I use it, the flies get at it, and I feel like a catch-*em*-alive, O.'

'Don't,' said Gerard, raising a protesting hand. 'I can't stand it.' And suddenly the little man sat down with his hands well out from his garments, and laughed almost as heroically as Gerard.

'You don't go about in that way, do you?' inquired Gerard breathlessly at last.

'No,' said the little man. 'It's a self-imposed sentence of imprisonment to use it. It's very hard, because a fellow can't even lie down, lest he should stick to something; and besides that, I'd sooner be as I am, than bald in spots, as I should be if it made the hair grow, and I had rubbed it off in places. There is a dreary sort of interest,' he added, 'in sitting before a looking-glass and betting with yourself against any special fly making a landing.'

Lord Byron has noted the indubitable fact that laughter leaves us doubly serious, but this was a droll introduction to a love-confidence.

'Why do you inflict these absurdities upon yourself?' asked Gerard.

'Well, it's unpleasant to know that you're singular,' the little man responded. 'You feel ostracised from your kind, don't you know?'

'Rubbish,' said Gerard.

'Well, that's nonsense of course, and was meant for nonsense. But I don't want to look like Methuselah yet, and I get taken for all manner of ages.'

'Jolly,' said Gerard, 'I begin to think you are in love. He had not the remotest belief that this shaft would hit the gold, or even the white, or he would never have loosed it.

'So I am,' said Reginald.—Gerard sat grave and silent.—'Why shouldn't I be?' asked the little man. 'I'm not Old Parr. And look here, Lumby, you can tell me perhaps whether I have a chance.' He looked guiltily at Gerard, and murmured: 'It's your cousin Milly.'

'I can't tell,' said Gerard. 'Go and speak to her. You have my best wishes.'

'It's horribly absurd, you know,' said the little man. 'Of course, it's awfully absurd. I used to watch Va—— Fellows I knew I used to watch, and I used to laugh at 'em no end. I never thought I should come to this,' he added, indicating the bottles on the dressing-table; 'but when a man's as far gone as I am, he'll do anything to make himself feel a little worthier.' When a man gets to so pronounced a badinage as this concerning himself, it is not easy for anything less than a hippopotamus to feel thinskin. Gerard saw that the little man was almost hysterical in his desire to hide himself, and sauntered away, therefore, with an aspect of carelessness, repeating his advice.

In a quarter of an hour Reginald descended with no trace of his late pursuits about him, and seeking Milly, found her in the garden, plunged desperately into the question at his heart—and was rejected. She respected him—she liked him—she offered him a sister's affection. She let him down as gently as she could; and he went away sadly, and threw all the preparations out of window, and grieved. He announced his depar-

ture that evening; and Gerard of course knew the cause of it, and was very sorry for the staunch friend, and the brother of his dead love. Before Reginald went away, however, he spoke to Milly again.

'You're very good and tender-hearted,' he said; 'and when I'm gone, you'll very likely accuse yourself of having made me miserable. Don't do that,' he pleaded stoutly. 'I'm not going to pay myself the poor compliment of saying I don't care. Of course I care; but I don't know who it was, just now, but there was a lady of whom somebody said that to know her was a liberal education. And I shall be a better fellow for it; and I'm very much obliged to you for putting it so kindly.—Good-bye,' he said briskly; but the tears were in his eyes.

Mrs Lumby spoke of his departure, and asked Gerard privately if he could divine what had driven Reginald away. He, thinking his mother innocent of the truth, respected his friend's secret; but it was soon apparent that she knew it, and had but asked her question for an object of her own.

'Why has Milly refused so many offers?' she asked. 'Is there nobody in the world will suit her, or is she in love with somebody already?'—Gerard was silent; but something in his mother's face and voice recalled to his mind the time when Milly had clung to him begging him to abandon his purposed pursuit of his enemy. Whilst he was thinking of this, his mother returned to the charge.—'Can you guess who it may be, Gerard?' There was that curious something in her face and voice again; but he was not of that tribe of dandies who are ready at any mere hint to believe a woman in love with them.

'Why should I guess?' he asked, as lightly as he could, and rising, made as if to leave the room.

His mother arose also and stood before him. 'Can't you guess, Gerard?'

He stood a little awkwardly before her, and would have made any light answer serve to turn the question aside, if he could have found one. But none occurred to him. His mother's reiterated question seemed to point to him, and the remembrance he had in his mind gave him the same indication; but he was loath to accept it. To love and love's delights, his heart was dead. Love is not so poor a thing in all hearts, that a year or two can serve to bury it out of memory.

'Gerard,' she said, seeing him silent, and perhaps mistaking the slight traces of confusion which declared themselves, 'I have known it a long time. She began to care for you when—when your troubles began, dear.'

'If it is so,' he returned, 'you should have kept her secret, mother.'

'Oh,' she cried, a little wounded, 'you are not to think that Milly has spoken to me, or that she guesses that I know. But women see these things.'

'I hope you are mistaken,' answered Gerard; and having kissed her, left the room. He was not a young man from whom caresses came lightly, or often; and the kiss seemed to his mother to set a certain seal of solemnity upon his refusal. A day or two later, she began quietly

to question Milly as to the reason of her manifold refusals of eligible young manhood.

'You don't want me to go away, do you, aunty?' asked the young lady; and the old one entered a warm disclaimer. 'Let me stay with you,' pleaded Milly. 'I shall never marry,' she added.

'Until the right man asks you,' returned the old lady.

'Let us wait till he comes, dear aunt,' said Milly, 'before we say any more about it.' So the question dropped, and was no more reverted to.

YOUNG LIFE IN THE STREETS.

WHEN John Leech drew his 'Portraits of Children of the Mobility,' he considered them as the antipodes of the class represented by the word he was playing upon—the Nobility. The armorial bearings he drew for them are not to be found at the heraldic offices: First Quarter, Azure, a Tilo dilapidated or shocking-bad Hat; Second Quarter, between two Clays in saltire Argent, in base, a Pot of Heavy frothed of the second; Third Quarter, Sable, a Bunch-of-Fives proper; Fourth Quarter, Or, a Neddy, Sable, passant, brayant, panniered proper, cabbaged and carroted Gules. The children born to these peculiar armorial honours are not, as the phrase goes, born with a silver spoon in their mouth; it has been aptly said, that if they were, the spoon would be transferred at once to a near relation, to provide something more nourishing to go into the mouth instead. When they are able to run about, they run into the streets, having been carried thither before by other babies; and there, to the casual observer, they seem to remain all the rest of their lives. Some of them play there; but these are the offspring of the higher mobility; others earn in the streets, others live in the streets, and neither the embrace of Charity nor the grasp of the School Boards can clear them thence to shelter. Most of them, alas! get shelter eventually for a series of lengthening periods—in prison. So we class young life in the streets in three simple divisions, under which all town-dwellers see it in their rambles—the children who play there, who work there, who live there.

The children at play make the bright side of the picture. They are worth watching. Their ingenuity, their animal spirits, their sublime power of 'making the best of it,' are all enviable. A dying merchant, looking from his window in old age and sickness, once sighed to give all he had if he might be the ragged boy at the opposite corner squabbling for marbles. Well, he too, in a figurative sense, had had his squabbling and his marbles once, and the boy had yet to come to age and labour or penury; for Fate deals, after all, with an even hand, and it may be that in many cases the blank, work-driven lives of the poor have a prelude of unusual recklessness of high spirit, and power of enjoyment where there is little to be enjoyed. They make the best of it. We have seen a poor child's feathered shuttle-cock, her only toy, go down into an area, and the child, after one melancholy peep

through the railings, was as gay as ever with a crumpled paper doing service instead. A little further on, inside another area railing, a goat was mountaineering, taking the cellar tops for the edges of a precipice; and there seemed to be something akin between the ready mode of 'making the best of it' in the dumb animal and in the uncared-for child. In the same spirit, not having green boughs to swing from, among flickering leaf shadows, they climb a lamp-post furtively to tie the rope, and fly round it with a shorter swing at each turn, till the final twist and collision. Moreover, like a large growth of spider, they spin their ropes across from rail to rail at doorways; so that the inhabitant who comes suddenly home in those romantic neighbourhoods, may have to wait till a living swingful of small nurses and babies in arms descend, and until the web of knots is cleared from the doorway, and the spiders sent to weave a barricade elsewhere.

The strangest oddity of child's street-play we ever found was carried on by a solitary little baby-boy, just able to jump with safety with both feet off the flags. He had a large doll for a partner, nearly as big as himself, held carefully with her toes on the ground; and without music or witnesses, he was slowly and solemnly dancing with the doll. Where had he seen couples dancing, and when, in his experienced babyhood? The question opens up infinite speculations, from the street-organ crowd to the organ-grinder's music in the hall at some home party—as it sometimes happens—or the 'Twopenny Hop!' Somewhere he had seen it, and profited thereby; and the simplicity of himself and his partner outshone the shepherd dances of Arcadia.

Child-life in the streets for the earning of a living, is no child's play. The picture darkens all at once when we come to that part of it, and darkens more and more until the end. Street-trading by children is not now so common as it was before the law made school attendance compulsory for at least some part of the year. In those days, the number of children earning a living by vending various articles in the London streets alone was computed to be far over ten thousand. Some counted them as nearer twenty thousand. One has only to turn to the pages of Mr Mayhew's *London Labour* to find in the accounts given by the children themselves, the extreme hardship of their lives. A little watercress-seller, eight years old, with no childish ways or thoughts, and with wrinkles in her face where the dimples ought to be, may be taken as an example of the sufferings of the very young, not only then, but in countless cases now. She sold watercresses at the rate of four bunches for a penny, making a profit of about fourpence a day. She had a home, and in this degree was in advance of many others of her class. But those who cherish children of eight years in brighter homes can best understand the terrible hardships implied in this poor little trader's account of herself. The watercresses had to be bought at Farringdon Market before six o'clock in the morning; and from six o'clock till ten, she traversed the streets to sell them, before tasting food. What simple eloquence of poverty is in a few of her answers to the questions asked by the compiler of the book! 'It's very cold,'

she replied, 'before winter comes on reg'lar—specially getting up of a morning. I get up in the dark, by the light of the lamp in the court. When the snow is on the ground, there's no "ereases." I bears the cold—you must; so I puts my hands under my shawl, though it hurts 'em to take hold of the "ereases," especially when we takes 'em to the pump to wash 'em.—No; I never see any children crying—it's no use.'

It would be a great mistake to imagine that young boys and girls are not still in thousands earning their way in the London streets with all the hardening results of street-life. The vast number of newspaper-boys and flower-girls is proof enough that, even before they are past the age of compulsory schooling, they find ways and means to trade in the streets for bread. And taking into account the immense increase of population, the number of young street-sellers cannot be regarded as very notably lowered merely because statistics are wanting. A child's earnings are reckoned to be less than sixpence a day, in return for which poor wages the little traders wander till late at night in the great public school of anything but high influence or good example. The costermongers look upon them as rivals; they say the children, as sellers, 'perverts others living, and ruins themselves;' and at least one half of the jealous remark is too often sadly true. Large numbers of them have no settled dwelling, or the worst substitute for a home. Many take their meals in the streets, buying a 'penn'orth of pudding' as a sustaining dinner; and the homeless, or those that are afraid to go home with stock unsold, find a refuge in crowded lodging-houses, or hide in stairs or in the markets, or lie in some corner under a dry arch.

The children who live and have their being in the streets are of a still poorer and more numerous class, though some of them are included in the class of street-traders. They buy in the markets, and sell at the corners; but they more frequently live by their wits, dishonestly or honestly, by begging or by 'fiddling'—that is, doing odd jobs, such as holding a horse or carrying a parcel. They are the 'Arabs'—in the deepest sense of the word, the most pitiable of all classes; for they are adrift and alone in the world, eluders of all law, and hardly decreased in number by legislation. Their very faults can hardly be called their own, so untaught are they, and so doomed to misery, unless some agency of protection chances to lay hands upon them individually. Whence they come and whither they go, no one knows; the beginning and end of their existence are alike mysterious, miserable problems; we only see them in childhood—or the substitute for childhood—a ragged shock-headed crew, innumerable and interminable, distinguished from the sheltered poor by the absence of all shyness and by the cunning of self-dependence in a close struggle for daily life.

Jo, in *Bleak House*, forms the typical representative of the whole class, or at least of the hundreds that, in reference to the rest of humanity, are more sinned against than sinning, even in that untaught struggle for existence. Jo is a living portrait; there is not a touch of exaggeration about it; and some there are who hold that the boy crossing-sweeper, with his whole

life and character dashed in by a few touches, is the finest character-drawing the novelist ever did, and as noble preaching for humanity's sake as was ever found in a popular fiction. Jo's ignorance is extreme, but not without glimmerings, that faintly brighten and go out. His mind is a blank; but he has a conscience—God made him, and man neglected him. He is described in half-a-dozen words; we all have seen him—'very muddy, very hoarse, very ragged.' He can say for himself that he never got into trouble—'sept not knowin' nothink and starvation.' He knows that a broom is a broom, and that a lie is bad; and when he is requested to tell the truth, he has a forcible formula: 'Wishermaydie if I don't, sir!' There is one jewel in him, among the mud, the hoarseness and the rags—one diamond. He has a heart; he has gratitude. 'He was very good to me, he was!' cries poor Jo against his ragged sleeve, when the man who had said kind words to him, the nameless friendless man, is 'stritched'—dead. That part of the portrait may perhaps be disbelieved, but only for want of knowledge of the poor. If there is no warmth of feeling, no faithfulness, no gratitude, it is because there has been no sympathy. The deaf child that has never heard a sound, will never speak; the heart that has never been spoken to, will never answer the surrounding hardness with human feeling. The children of the streets are often hard, cunning, selfish. But why? They are struggling by their wits for existence; they have never met with kindness, softness, sympathy. No heart has spoken to theirs, and what wonder if they are mute? Yet, in the language of the heart, they could speak by word and deed, if we would but make them hear.

Some of the young 'Arabs,' if not as helplessly ignorant as Jo, have a ludicrous confusion of ideas in place of any knowledge. Mr Mayhew, to whose work we have already referred, catechised one or two of them and received replies, provoking something of mirth as well as pity. One bright youth was questioned about the battle of Waterloo, the Queen, Shakespeare—with surprising results. He 'hadn't heerd' of the battle of Waterloo, nor who it was atween; but once lived down by Waterloo Road. Had no notion what the Queen had to do; but did not think she could do as much as the Lord Mayor or 'the Lambeth beak.' He associated the Immortal Bard with small illicit pawnbroking, for he 'had heerd' of Shakespeare; but didn't know whether he was alive or dead, and didn't care. A man with something like that name kept a dolly-shop, and did stuning.'

At some part of their career, the schools may do something to teach boys of this class; but often no school ever gets held of them; and in any case, there is something needed far more than instruction in the three 'Rs.' The training to a Higher Life is what they need—the care for soul and body, the taking in, not the taking up. 'Beggars ought not to be encouraged,' says the Baronet to his little daughter Adeline, who is pitying beggar children beneath the window—some of the Children of the Mobility, drawn by John Leech. 'They have no business there; it is contrary to law; and I am surprised that the policeman does not take them up.'

'Take them up, papa!' says Adeline, the phrase producing an association of ideas in her youthful mind. 'Dr Goodman said in his sermon that we ought to take poor people in!'

The number of these destitute children—the poorest of the poor, having the streets for their dwelling-place, and living no one knows how—is a number counted already in London by tens of thousands, and yearly increasing, despite the many generous and noble efforts to shelter and save. As the writer of *London Poor* has summed up their case: 'What little information they receive is obtained from the worst class—from cheats, vagabonds, and rogues; what little amusement they indulge in springs from sources the most poisonous—the most fatal to happiness and welfare; what little they know of a home is necessarily associated with much that is vile and base.' How they live at all is a marvel. The refuse of the markets makes a large item in their daily fare. About eight o'clock on summer mornings, when the wholesale trade is nearly over in the rough-paved space round Covent Garden Market, crowds of these destitute children may be seen there, scrambling for the battered plums and other decayed fruit cast away as useless—one might almost say, as poisonous. And any Saturday, those who buy costly flowers and fruit in the bright vista of the market's bloom-laden central arcade, may see a vision of London poverty, if they will step outside, and make their way to the open, where the emptied baskets make flanking barricades. There are little children pinched in face and thinly clad, grave-faced women, groups of ragged boys, gathering the cabbage leaves and all the vegetable refuse from the street; every scrap, broken and half rotten, they turn over and judge slowly, with hungry eyes and anxious hands, and no heed for passers-by. The children carry off heaps of green stump and leaf, stuffed into bits of sack, or looped up in the front of a skirt; and we have seen a whole grave congress of business-like young things, and pale-faced women, and hungry lads, assembled round a space strewn with the stall-sweepings of orange peels, sorting and picking up to carry away the bits of peel on which some pulp was left. So near the gay stream in the central arcade, so near the departing carriages, the sight suggests the old saying, that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives.

If we knew everything, even in the one small world of London, it would be heart-breaking knowledge. As George Eliot says, speaking only of the pathos of trivial incidents, if we had a keen sense of daily life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. But of what should we die, or rather how could we live, if we realised the life of the poorest, who rise daily to the same sunlight, and especially the life of the children of misery? When one sees some chance glimpse of it, the helpless remonstrance is, What can I do? But there are two ways of saying that word. What can I do? never did anything. What can I do? is reflective, energetic, hopeful, brave, ready for any chance, and counting no chance small. It means work, and does it. Nor

can the work ever be counted little, if it be the stretching of a loving hand, even for a moment, to aid in lifting young life from the mire.

MARJORIE.

AN OLD VIRGINIAN STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

LIEUTENANT EDWARD HARRADEN of His Majesty's 50th Regiment of Foot—a fine young fellow, with far more of the hearty Squire about him than of the typical officer of the day, was waiting that afternoon at a very familiar spot, situated just about half-way between the town and the barracks on Mount Pleasant. Of course he was waiting for Marjorie; and as punctuality is as rigid a virtue in love as in war, he had not to wait long before he espied a light active form, furs and ribbons flying, making the best of its way towards him through the deep snow, and in a few seconds was pressing his own honest face against the dimples and blushes of Marjorie's.

'O Edward!' cried the breathless girl; 'such fun before dinner! You know my tutor—Old Candlestick, as you call him—well, now, what do you think he's been and done?'

'Can't think, my darling,' replied the young officer.

'Well, what should you think was the most unlikely thing in the world that he would do?'

'Well,' said the young Englishman, after a pause, for, being a ponderous man, he was a ponderous thinker, 'I should think the most unlikely thing he could do would be to make love to you.'

'O you clever man!' exclaimed Marjorie; 'that's just what he has been doing. The impudence! I could have boxed his ears, as he stood there like a great fish. And you should have seen his face when I told him what I thought of him! Because, you know, he's been and sneaked to my father about our acquaintance; and you know that just as a red rag maddens a bull, so does a red uniform madden my poor old father. And you may imagine, Edward, what a talking-to I got last night! If I'd been a thief, I could not have got worse.'

'Well, never mind, my pet,' said the officer; 'he'll get over it. All the good folks about here look upon us as fiends. Give a dog a bad name, you know, and the rest of it. We hear plenty of it, and we've heard more than usual lately.'

'But, my love, what are we to do?' urged Marjorie plaintively.

'Why, my dear,' replied her swain, 'although I'm an Englishman, I can't help seeing that this horrid war will soon be over. Your people must be free sooner or later; and although I bear the king's commission, I don't see why they shouldn't be; and I can't think it right that two peoples of the same blood and language should be cutting each other's throats, as we have for the last seven years been doing. And then all evil feelings will disappear; and I will go to your father, and tell him that I love you, and that I want you for my wife. And if he refuses, why—why, we'll run

away; and if he says all right, why, then it's all right.'

'What a clever old dear you are!' said Marjorie, looking up in the young fellow's handsome face with proud admiration.

'How I wish, Marjorie,' he said, 'that your father wasn't such a prejudiced, strait-laced old fellow. We're going to keep Christmas in such style up at the Mount; but it'll be funny without any girls; but if he'd only let you come, all the other people would follow his example, for he's rather a big man, isn't he?'

'No; I'm afraid you won't get much Virginian beauty up there,' said Marjorie. 'You should hear how the women all talk against your people, just as much for fashion, I believe, as from genuine principle. But I *should* like to come.'

And so they sauntered on, chatting the too fast hours of daylight away, until the Lieutenant was reminded that his was the night-guard; and they went back to the Half-way Tree, as they called their trysting-place, and with one fond kiss, they parted.

After nightfall, the preparations for the *coup de main* were carried on quietly but actively in Alexandria, and no one was more active or energetic than the stalwart old farmer of Braddock's. He hastily swallowed his tea, much to the surprise of Marjorie, who was accustomed to see him linger over that meal as an important epoch of the day, and was out into the town and about the farms, enlisting recruits, holding consultations with his brother-conspirators, buying up all the muskets and pikes and swords and ammunition he could lay his hands upon, stirring up the lazy, cheering the few who were despondent, doing, in fact, the work of two men, despite his load of sixty years.

As might be imagined, Marjorie was much alarmed at the strange state of affairs at home—at the strings of carts and gangs of men laden with arms and mysterious packages which continued to pass in and out of the garden from dusk until after midnight, all in silence, and looking almost spectral in the dim lantern light.

'What does all this mean, Cicero?' she asked of the old negro.

'I dunno, Missy, I's sure; nebber see sich goin's on, nebber! Gemmans been runnin' up an' down stairs, an' in an' out jes like de flies in de molasses pot.'

She then asked one of the workers.

'Why, bless your heart, Miss,' replied the man, 'we're a-goin' to do away with the Britishers, that's what we're a-goin' to do; and accompanied his answer with winks and head-shakings which spoke volumes.

'Do away with the Britishers!' repeated Marjorie to herself. 'That means fighting, and murder—and perhaps Edward, or father—and a terrible cloud of thoughts came over her mind. 'Oh, how happy we could all be,' she thought, 'if people had no such things as prejudices!'

Meanwhile, her father was returning from the house of one of the confederates, which stood a little beyond the other side of the town, on the road to Mount Pleasant, and was not a little surprised to meet the Rev. Nahum Bond, who was evidently in a great hurry. Had it not been pitch-dark, he would have noticed, too, that the minister was equally surprised and rather

confused at seeing him; but the young man was quick at recovery, and said: 'Just whom I wanted to see, Master Hood. I am sorry to say anything that may offend you, but I feel it my duty to warn you against your daughter.'

'Lord! man,' exclaimed the old farmer, 'what has the wench been doing now? Laughing at her tutor?'

'Nay, nay, Master Hood,' replied Nahum; 'it is no light matter. I speak not of what she has done, but of what she may do. She knows perfectly well what our project is; she loves one of the men against whom we are to work; she met him this afternoon. Put two and two together. Good-night!' And he was lost in the darkness.

For a moment the old man stood bewildered. Then he smote his brow and muttered: 'What a fool I have been not to send her away! Of course I see what the parson means—that she will betray us—and yet I dare not think that she would do so. Her love for the red coat may be strong, but it would be strange if her love for her father and her country were not stronger. However, I will see her.' And he strode on homewards.

Marjorie met him at the door with a frightened face. 'O father, I am so glad you have come,' she cried, throwing her arms around his neck; 'I am so frightened. Tell me what all this means—these guns and swords and bullets, and all this quiet and secrecy.'

Her father gently removed her arms from his neck, and held her out at arms-length, looking keenly into her deep brown eyes, in each of which a tear glistened. 'And you mean to say, Marjorie, that you know nothing about it?'

'Nothing, father, but what Abram Stoke told me just now about doing away with the Britishers,' answered Marjorie.

'And you did not tell Mr Harraden about it, when you met him this afternoon?'

'I did not know it, father—indeed, I did not; and if I had, I do not think that—that—'

'No, no, no!' exclaimed her father, kissing her; 'I don't believe you would.'

'But tell me, dear father,' she said, 'is there to be fighting and shooting and murder? Oh, I am so terrified! Suppose you were to be killed, and suppose—suppose he—you know I can't help loving him, and so would you, if you knew how good and kind and true he is.'

'Tut, tut, lass! never fear,' replied the old man; 'these are not things for girls to be talking about. It's time for you to be in bed.—Good-night, my love; I have much writing to do.'

Marjorie went sadly enough up to her room, and in truth hers was not an enviable position. A dread was on her that something terrible was about to happen, something in which the two men she loved beyond all others in the world were concerned, and she could do nothing to prevent it. At one time, she determined that she would warn her lover of the danger; but the image of her stern, patriotic father, and of his wrath at what he would assuredly term betrayal, came before her. Then she resolved to throw herself at her father's feet and to implore him to abandon his design. Her thoughts were interrupted by a knock at the door; and in answer to her 'Come in,' the woolly head and

ebony countenance of Cicero appeared: 'Please, Missy, massa want you. He's in a debil of a rage.'

Marjorie went down, and found her father striding up and down the little room he styled his study.

'Marjorie,' he said, in a voice which was scarcely coherent for passion, 'if I was to shoot you on the spot, it would not be more than you deserve.' These were terrible words for a father to address to his child, and still more terrible when they came from a father who loved his child so dearly as Jeremiah Hood loved Marjorie.

'What—what do you mean, father?' asked the terrified girl.

'What do I mean, girl? You know very well what I mean. Read that!' and he threw on the table towards her a small scrap of paper.

She read: '*You are betrayed. Be warned in time.*'

She could not recognise the writing, nor was there any signature to this laconic epistle. Turning it over, she saw in smaller letters: '*The penalty for concealing arms or for harbouring revolt is immediate death and confiscation of estate.*'

'But, father,' said Marjorie, 'I have had nothing to do with this. Surely you do not think that I have betrayed you?'

'Not a word more,' said her father, raising his hand; 'I know that you have betrayed us. You will keep your room until I find means to send you to Connecticut.'

'But, dear father, hear me, I beg of you. Hear your daughter, your Marjorie, whom you say you love,' cried the girl in piteous tones.

'Silence!' said Hood in a stern voice. 'Did I not love you as I do, you would ere now have been lying where you now stand. Obey me, and go.'

Poor Marjorie left the room crying bitterly; and her father went out to tell the news to the confederates.

Next evening, Alexandria lay sound asleep in her mantle of snow as the clock struck midnight. It was the 24th of December 1781. A few lights from the ships by the quay-side, and from the *Royal George* and *City* hotels, were the only indications of a town visible from the British huts upon Mount Pleasant. In these 'good old days,' folk kept reasonable hours, and except upon such special occasions as a birthday night or a subscription ball, as a rule retired to rest about the same hour that their modern posterity are at dinner. But upon Mount Pleasant there was activity, and knocking about of lanterns, and buckling on of knapsacks, and buttoning up of gaiters; and ere the twelfth solemn note had died away, a hundred men were drawn up in motionless array upon the little parade-ground. At a few minutes past the hour, the word was given; the company faced to the right and commenced to tramp through the thick snow towards the sleeping, unconscious town beneath them. At their head marched the Colonel, and by his side a tall figure muffled in a long cloak. They did not march by the direct route to Alexandria; but in order to avoid passing through the town, chose a back-path, which in the course of half an hour brought them at the gate of Braddock's.

Here the guide—he of the cloak—would have left them; but the Colonel held him fast by the collar. 'Nay, my good fellow,' he said; 'not so fast. Perhaps you are playing us false.—Lieutenant Harraden, take a sergeant and two file and enter the house.'

The Lieutenant saluted; and with his men went up to the door, while the remainder of the company 'stood easy' in the garden, bayonets fixed and muskets ready. In obedience to his knock, Cicero opened the door in his usual cautious manner; but a kick from the foot of the sergeant hurried his movements, for it sent the door flying open, and poor Cicero all but sprawling on the polished oak floor. The Lieutenant—whose feelings may be imagined at making such an entry into the shrine of his goddess—walked in, and requested the rueful Cicero to show him into his master's room.

'Massa hab go to bed dis tree hours,' said the seared negro.

'Very sorry,' said Harraden; 'but I must see him.'

As a rule, it was as much as Cicero's place was worth to disturb his master during even his afternoon nap; but the vision of the redcoats in the garden urged him to sink all reluctance in the matter; and in a few minutes a heavy step was heard descending the staircase, and Mr Hood appeared, clad in night-shirt, greatcoat, and slippers.

'Very sorry to disturb you at this time of night, Mr Hood,' said the Lieutenant politely; 'but I am acting under orders, and I must ask you to show me the way to your cellars.'

'Who are you, sir?' asked the old man scornfully.

'I am Lieutenant Harraden of His Britannic Majesty's Fiftieth Regiment of Foot.'

'Hm! Harraden. Fiftieth Regiment. Kent name and Kent regiment. I'm ashamed of you, sir; but as I see you have force at your back, I suppose I must obey.'

He led the way down to the cellars. The men searched high and low, sounded floor and walls with the butt-ends of their muskets; but not an arm of any kind could they find.

The Lieutenant reported matters to the Colonel. That officer, who was smoking a pipe in Jeremiah Hood's study, fumed and raged. 'Call in that rascally spy,' he said.

The sergeant went out and returned with Nahum Bond, almost dropping with shame and terror. The old farmer's feelings may be imagined when he beheld his ideal man, the destined husband for Marjorie, before him; but he could find no vent for his disgust in words; he simply sat down and groaned.

'Didn't you say that there were arms and ammunition stored here, and that an attack upon our position was to be made to-morrow night?' roared the Colonel; and without waiting for whatever answer the trembling traitor could have given, continued: 'Of course you did.—Sergeant, do your duty.'

Nahum was dragged out; and before the old farmer could interfere, the stillness of the outside world was broken by the discharge of half-a-dozen muskets. There was one cry, and Nahum Bond had paid the penalty of his double perfidy with his life.

'You will remain here, Lieutenant Harraden,' said the Colonel, 'until we receive marching orders.'

He went out. The rattle of unfixing bayonets was heard, and in a few minutes the garden was empty, save for one stiff rigid figure, with eyes wide staring up into the starlit heavens.

The old farmer seemed to have fallen into a stupor, but the departure of the troops awakened him. He rose and approached Harraden. 'You are the gentleman I believe, sir,' he said, 'with whom my daughter is acquainted.'

'I have that inexpressible honour,' said the young officer. 'And in return for the service I have rendered you to-night, I have to beg that you will bestow on me her hand.'

'Service, sir! What service?' exclaimed the astonished old man.

'Did you get a note, warning you that you were betrayed?' said the Lieutenant.

'I did, sir. And what then?' replied the old gentleman.

'I wrote that, sir,' said Harraden. 'And I wrote it at the expense of my honour as a British officer, out of my great love for your daughter. It has given you time to get your cellar cleared of the arms stored there. We shall leave Alexandria in a few days, so that there will be no need for you to meditate a continuance of your design. Had I not warned you, the consequences—well, you know what the consequences would have been. Moreover, Mr Hood, remember that I exposed that double-dealing traitor who lies outside in the snow. I'm obliged to blow my own trumpet a bit, because I know how strong your prejudices are against my country. Yet after all, Mr Hood, there is something even thicker than the mere fact of being Englishmen, between us. You surely can't forget that the Hood and Harraden estates have lain alongside each other in old Kent for centuries.'

The simple heartiness of this appeal touched the old man's heart. 'I'm an old fool,' he said, rising, 'to be meddling in these sort of affairs at my time of life. I am quite sensible of the services you have rendered me; and if you ask me as a reward that—'

At this moment the door was pushed timidly open and Marjorie's terrified face appeared. She had heard the sounds of angry voices and the report of the firearms, and had been quaking in fear upon the landing above; but when she saw her father and her sweetheart with their hands joined in the middle of the room, she uttered a joyful cry and sprang towards them. 'Oh, I have been so afraid!' she said; 'I heard such angry talking and the sound of shooting, and I was sure that one of you had shot the other.'

'Nay, lass,' said her father. 'Mr Harraden has saved us all from ruin and disgrace, and that double-faced villain Nahum Bond has been shown in his true colours. He was, I find, what you called him—a sneak, and something worse. Now, then,' he said, nodding his head towards the British officer, 'sweetheart together as much as you like.'

Mount Pleasant was evacuated by the British in the course of the week; and everybody knows that a treaty of peace was signed in less than a year after these events between Great Britain and the United States of America. Edward

Harraden retired from the army, returned to Alexandria, married Marjorie, and was soon one of the most popular men in Virginia. Many and many a pipe did he and the old farmer smoke over the International Question; but upon Christmas nights, when the curtains were snugly drawn and the logs crackled cheerily upon the hearth, they mutually sank all differences of opinion, told the story of Nahum Bond's treachery over again, and agreed that circumstances had after all turned out for the best. And when at length the old man died, Edward transported his wife and two pretty children over the Atlantic, and finally settled down on the ancestral estate in Kent.

NOTES ON CONTINENTAL TRAVEL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

AMONG many reminiscences of bygone times, not the least happy are those of such a journey between Geneva and Paris, albeit the route was in itself as barren and uninteresting as might be. It was a sharp, biting, comfortless-looking October morning when we left Geneva, and looked our last at its busy streets, pretty villas, intensely blue lake, and the numerous washing-boats, where the stout matrons and maidens of the place did so mercilessly belabour the linen surrendered to their blows. We were amply provided with books, work, travelling-chessboards, and all the remedies against ennui that could be stowed away in the pockets of a most comfortable travelling-carriage—*une grosse berline*, as they called it at the hotels, where its capacious dimensions and powers of accommodation excited great approval. With these resources, we might have made ourselves happy, notwithstanding the raw chilly weather and the anticipation of a long journey; but there was the custom-house, that bugbear of tourists with the lightest consciences. Until that ordeal was passed—and we were not to reach the frontier till pretty late in the day—book or work failed to interest. Like the sword of Damocles, it disturbed our peace while it hung over us.

Dire were the tidings of this formidable *douane* that circulated round the *table-d'hôte* of the hotel the evening before we started.

'The strictest in all Europe,' said a grave-looking gentleman in black at the top of the board.

'You may well say that,' exclaimed a little fiery Frenchman, with a gray head, and small black eyes very inflamed and red about the lids, which glittered like live coals when he spoke. 'I crossed the frontier last year with my wife, a delicate, timid little woman. Well, Monsieur, those custom-house women, they carried her off into an inner room; they searched her, ripped up the very hems of her gown, to discover lace or jewellery in them; stripped off her clothes, the fiends, and would not let her maid near her. They thought to shut me out too, saying a man had no business in their *appartements*; but I forced in the door, *alors!* and found my poor *petite* half dead with fear in the hands of these two female ogres. We soon had the place to ourselves. When I am once put into a passion, I am pretty well in earnest; I can tell you; and so the *douaniers* found out.'

'Bah!' said a young man who sat next us, and who seemed vexed at the dismayed attention with which the tirade of his fiery-eyed compatriot was listened to—'bah! What signifies what he says! *Soyez tranquilles, mesdames*; no one will treat you with disrespect. English travellers and with your own carriage—very different from diligence passengers like him, forsooth!'

Notwithstanding this and other reassuring speeches, we felt somewhat disturbed when, descending into a rocky valley, the postillions turned round in their saddles, pointed forward with their whips, and announced 'Les Rousses.'

There was no town or village to mark the frontier. A shabby little inn stood on the roadside, about the door of which were grouped the *douaniers*, awaiting their prey. They were all on the alert as we drove up; and the carriage had scarcely stopped when the *chef* had the door open, the steps flung down, and his arm offered in the most gallant manner to help us out. Nothing could be more unlike the ideal of a gruff, surly custom-house officer than this individual. He was a small man, with a smiling countenance, and a carefully waxed moustache. With the greatest politeness, he requested the keys, begged to know whether we had anything to *déclarer*, entreated *ces dames* to be under no sort of uneasiness about their *toilettes*, as nothing would be tossed or spoilt—they might rely upon him for that—and ended by showing us into the house, where he trusted we would dine comfortably and rest for an hour, leaving everything to him. In short, if this very amiable personage had not been a custom-house *chef*, and if, while he was uttering his courteous speeches, and so gracefully doing the honours of Les Rousses, we had not beheld the work of spoliation rapidly going on upon our poor carriage—pockets ransacked, books examined; imperials, boxes, and bonnet-cases unstrapped, and borne off between blue-frocked, red-capped men, under an escort of *douaniers*, to the great barn-like building where they were to undergo inspection—in short, but for all this, we should have been enchanted with our polite friend.

On entering the frontier inn, we found ourselves in the kitchen, where they were fussing about preparing dinner. A large fire blazed in the open chimney, looking very pleasant on that chill October afternoon; a contrast to the small room inside where the table was laid—so bare and comfortless it looked, with its dreary white walls, white ceiling, white cloth, white plates and dishes, white napkins. The very floor was painted white, without an atom of rug or carpet. After a few minutes, we quitted its cold exclusiveness for the more genial atmosphere of the kitchen outside. Here was a fat elderly gentleman seated by the fire, who politely drew back his chair, and of course—for he was a Frenchman—began to talk.

'Ah ça, Mesdames, you have just arrived, and the *douaniers* are as busy as bees. I too have come to-day from Geneva, a long journey. Such a searching as they gave me, *ma foi*! I don't feel the better for it. They kneaded me as if I were a lump of dough; watches and trinkets, you see, are so small and so easily smuggled; and these men are desperately suspicious. More than that, they prodded me with long pins they have for the purpose, to see whether I had anything concealed in the lining of my clothes. Many

a brooch and set of studs has crossed the frontier in that way before now, *allex*! The *douaniers* are up to every trick by this time, however. They have the ladies searched too, Mesdames. Has your turn come yet? A woman does that.—Ah, here she comes while of her we speak.'

A forbidding-looking woman did make her appearance at that moment. 'Perhaps,' we thought with a shiver, 'the very same who so rudely maltreated the poor little Frenchwoman.' She proved, however, to have no more fell intent than to stir the sauce for the cutlets. But we had had enough of the fire and the conversation of our garrulous friend, and so beat a retreat into the cold white room.

With the dessert, our graceful *douanier* made his *entrée* cap in hand. He laid the keys on the table, and presented a paper with a list of things on which duty was to be paid, assuring us that the various small articles and nicknacks about which we were so anxious had all been safely restored to their places. This we afterwards discovered to be the case; not one was lost.

After leaving Les Rousses, the road increased in wildness. Evening was closing in as we slowly toiled up one of the rugged passes of the Jura Mountains; and when we reached the top and stopped to breathe the six horses which had dragged us up, the scene all around was savage and picturesque. Here four of our horses were withdrawn, and with two only we started for the descent of the mountain pass, a wall of perpendicular rock rising on our right, and on our left a precipice. It was growing dusk, and we were tired and half asleep, so that, notwithstanding the jolting and the increased pace, we were not aware that there was anything wrong. Soon, however, we were roused from our torpor. 'They are all lost!' shouted a couple of men who came running after us, and whose appalled looks spoke more than their words.

We were indeed in a fearful predicament. The road, at all times steep and difficult, was now especially dangerous, from being utterly out of repair. It was about to be abandoned for a new one, to be opened in a few days, so that probably we were the last travellers over this condemned pass. It very nearly proved the scene of our last journey over any road rough or smooth; for now we were every moment getting closer to the yawning precipice. Our drag-chains had snapped; and the carriage, too heavy for a single pair of horses to keep straight, was running towards the edge, dragging them with it. In a few minutes more it would have been over, and dashed to pieces! Just then, the men whose cries had roused us up, succeeded in overtaking us. They seized the wheels, pulled the postillion, stupefied by terror, off the horses, and made him give his assistance; tore open the carriage-door; and at last, by the united efforts of all parties, biped and quadruped, the ponderous vehicle was dragged back from the brink.

After this providential escape, we dared not trust again to one pair of horses, though we were told more were never put on in descending this pass. Had the road been in its usual repair, and the carriage less heavy, there would have been no risk or difficulty. A messenger was despatched to the foot of the mountain for two more steeds; and we proceeded on our journey

and reached our sleeping-place, Saint Laurent, without any other adventure.

How delightful, in those bygone times, was the arrival at a comfortable inn after long journeys such as I am describing; when the chilly autumnal evening having set in, we arrived weary and half asleep, cold and hungry, at our destination. How cheerful the bright wood-fire, piled high, and crackling in the open chimney; how grateful the warmth to numbed feet and fingers! And then the appetising nondescript repast, half-supper, half-dinner. In the centre of the table rose the inevitable pair of tall white *cafetieres*, flanked by clustering cups; one of them filled with rich country milk just 'off the boil'; the other with coffee, hot, strong, and fragrant—such as is seldom tasted out of France—reviving and delicious to tired travellers. The savoury roasted partridges, and smoking dish of *pommes de terre frites*; the tempting *côtelettes* and apricot omelet; the fresh eggs, delicate rolls, pats of butter, and golden honey, all discussed with an abundant seasoning of Spartan sauce. The incidents of the day are talked over. Pretty 'bits' on the road—villages, peasants, sunsets, and moonshine, all look better and brighter, reviewed now by the light of the merry blaze, and called to mind over the well-spread table.

But in spite of refreshing coffee, reviving warmth, and roadside recollections, fatigue and sleepiness will make themselves felt. And then how luxurious to stretch the weary limbs in beds so proverbially excellent as the French; where even in the humblest village inn, the woollen mattresses are so well constructed and clean, undergoing as they do, annually or bi-annually, a thorough unripping and re-making; where the sheets and pillow-covers, often trimmed with coarse lace, are the whitest of the white and the finest of the fine; and where the only drawback was the prospect of having to get up and leave that snug nest at six o'clock the next morning.

The close of another day's travelling brought us to Montbard, a considerable village, or rather small town. We were fortunate in having it as our place of rest for Sunday; for, besides being very prettily situated and possessing some local interest, its little rural inn, *Point du Jour*, was snugness itself. A French family of some importance, from the Faubourg St-Germain, were staying at the inn, having come to Montbard to visit their estates. The rencontre with them cost us a maid; for the charms of our abigail, who was a pretty young Londoner, made such fierce havoc in the heart of their chasseur, that he found her out afterwards in Paris, and presented himself, resplendent in a green and gold livery, and headgear surmounted by a wondrous plume of feathers. A six months' courtship was the consequence. How it was carried on, we never could imagine; for he knew no English; and her few French phrases appertained not to Cupid's vocabulary, but to vulgar necessities of life, such as 'hot water,' 'more towels,' and so forth. However, he managed to make her understand that he had saved money enough to set up a confectioner's shop in the Rue St-Honoré, and to persuade her to become his wife and preside over it.

Our Sunday at Montbard was most enjoyable—

one of those bright genial days of autumn, when the glowing tints and rich colouring of the season are gilded and lit up by warm sunshine, and all nature looks smiling and glad. We loitered away an hour after breakfast in the garden belonging to the inn. It was a pleasant sunny place on the side of a hill fronting the south, and contained an abundant supply of vegetables, flowers, and fruit-trees, with great patches of those sweet herbs which the French use so largely in their cuisine.

In the course of the day we sallied forth to explore the town and to visit an interesting château in the neighbourhood. How different all looked from an English village on the Sabbath day! The church was open, it was true, and the people in holiday attire, but on all sides the usual week-day business of life was going on. The village forge was in active operation, a crowd gathered round it; and some very exciting piece of gossip seemed to be on the tapis. The blacksmith, a fine young fellow, whose snow-white Sunday shirt-sleeves contrasted strongly with a smutted face and coal-black hair and eyes, stopped in his work, eagerly gesticulating. His animated figure looked doubly on the *qui vive* beside the quiet, patient, dozing old horse standing motionless on three legs—the fourth in the hand of the blacksmith.

The château to which we were bound was the family mansion of a no less celebrated personage than Buffon. The proprietrix was the widow of his son. The latter had been guillotined in the French Revolution, and here his bereaved wife was in the habit of spending several months of the year in seclusion. She was now at her *hôtel* in Paris, and the house was shut up. It looked like most French châteaux, dull and formal. On a terrace in front was ranged a long straight row of orange-trees in boxes, not yet removed to their winter-quarters. A few blossoms remained on them, poor shrivellings, but still retaining their delicious perfume.

Apart from all the charms of association, the grounds of the Buffon Château were pleasant to ramble through. There were winding walks in the wood, thickly strewn with a deep rich carpet of red leaves, elastic to the tread, and emitting a delightful fragrance. One of these walks led to a temple or summer-house built on a height, with a background of tall trees. The old man who accompanied us paused reverentially before the building, and said: 'This was the great Buffon's favourite resort. He used to bring up his books and papers to this retired place, and it was here he studied and composed his works.' From this gray-headed old follower of the family, who had the charge of the château during Madame Buffon's absence, we expected to hear some particulars concerning the great naturalist beyond those to be found in his biographies. But he was silent and uncommunicative. The fate of his late master seemed to have deeply touched the old man, and to have substituted a melancholy respectful air, in the stead of the usual garrulity of his age and nation. He told us that his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been in the service of the house of Buffon. We called to mind the anecdote of the author and his attendant recorded in the *Memoirs*, but failed to elicit any more about it from this, the descendant no doubt of the servitor in question.

Buffon, his biographers tell us, had an aversion to early rising amounting almost to constitutional infirmity. He resolved to conquer it, and formed a thousand good resolutions, broken as often as they were made. The valet who attended him was strictly enjoined to rouse him in the morning, and not to desist until he had thoroughly awakened and induced him to rise. All failed, however. To his mortification and chagrin, the naturalist found himself day after day waking to self-reproach, and the sense of time lost and opportunities of study gone by. He bitterly accused his servant of neglecting his orders by allowing him to sleep.

'But Monsieur,' replied the man, 'you are so angry with me when I call you! You abuse and drive me away; you command—threaten! It pains me. I get ashamed to persevere, and dare to torment you no longer.'

'Have I not told you a thousand times,' exclaimed Buffon, 'not to mind my anger—not to listen to my threats? Have I not ordered you to rouse me, shake me, pull me out of bed?—Stay,' added the philosopher, as a new idea occurred to him; 'every morning that you have me up at the desired hour, I shall reward you with a *douceur*. Ten minutes beyond that, and not a sou do you touch!'

This argument was all-prevailing. From that day forth the valet gained money; the master, time; and posterity, instruction. 'Most probably,' we thought, as we explored the deserted summer-house, 'this temple was the place where the hours wrested from sleep were spent; and the father of our taciturn old guide was probably the servant whose morning task was at the same time so painful and so profitable.'

'LUCK.'

AN article formerly appeared in the pages of this *Journal* (No. 867) with the above heading; and the following additional instances of persons who, alone and unassisted by friends or capital, have yet succeeded in building up substantial and independent fortunes—one of them being a relative of the writer's, and the other persons well known to his family—may interest some of its numerous readers.

A—L— was the third son of a gentleman who ruined himself some seventy years ago by numerous speculations. As the latter had a large family, it became a difficult matter to start his younger children in life. A—, however, received a thoroughly good education at the Edinburgh High School, and at the age of sixteen was sent by his father to London, where he arrived with only a sovereign in his pocket, and the knowledge that it would be in vain ever to apply to his father for further help. The lad's great desire was to become a lawyer. But how could he ever obtain his articles? However, he managed to get employment at a well-known firm of solicitors as a copying clerk; and eked out his small salary by copying legal documents out of hours. In this way he managed in time to make upwards of two pounds a week; and that sum realised,

he persuaded his cousin Mary, an orphan without any fortune, to whom he had been engaged before leaving the North, to become his wife. They were little more than boy and girl; but there was no one at hand to protest against such a seemingly imprudent alliance.

She shared her boy-husband's labours, assisted in the copying of legal papers, and was in all ways a helpmeet to him. At last there came some conveyancing work to the office with a number of old deeds to be looked through, and one of these, in its antique spelling, was undecipherable alike to the heads of the legal house and all their clerks. A—L— heard the discussion about this deed in the office, and at length modestly requested to be allowed to take this obscure one home with him to his lodgings. The request was granted, for the senior partner had long marked the ability, as well as steadiness, of his young copying clerk. A— did unravel the mysteries of the deed; and his employer was so pleased with him, that he at once presented him with a gift of thirty pounds, telling him he ought to be articed; and that could he but manage the sum needed, he should be very pleased to take him into the office as an articed clerk.

This was a difficult matter to accomplish; but at that time there was in London a cousin's cousin, whose mother's family were also Scotch and north-country, who subsequently became one of the two founders of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company, and represented a large seaport in parliament; and he consented to lend A—L— the five hundred pounds needed in those days for his articles.

It was a time of stern economy to the young married pair, and all they had to live upon was the copying he and she could do out of office-hours; and she would often exclaim in after and affluent days: 'Oh, A—, it was a struggle; you kept me very short, and worked me very hard.' And he would supplement her remark by adding that had he his life over again, he did not think that he could do all the work he did then.

He paid his kinsman honestly, interest as well as principal; and by the time he was forty-five, he had such a legal business of his own, that he could afford to keep a fishing-lodge in Scotland, and lived in a country-place within daily access of London, where he kept his keepers, and enjoyed his sport at times with the county gentlemen around. He was well known in the Hampshire streams, for fly-fishing was his great delight, and his anecdotes and keen remarks made his company much sought after. In his latter years he prided himself greatly upon the quality of the wine in his cellar; but he kept some of the frugal habits of his youth throughout his life, and left a large fortune.

J—G— was apprenticed to a saddler in a suburb of London. He proved himself steady, trustworthy, and industrious, and in time became foreman of the shop; and when his master died, he in due course of time married the widow, and owned with her the snug little business. One day he was sent for to see to the repairs

of some leather straps connected with some machinery. His quick intelligence and keen eye at once perceived a much better way of working it. This discovery was the beginning of his fortune. He invented some machinery for making crape, and in time he realised a fortune of twenty thousand a year. It is told of him when dwelling in a large park, and seeking to live a country gentleman's life, that he would sit at the open drawing-room window gun in hand, while the keepers drove the deer across for him to get a shot! He and his wife kept their simple quiet personal ways in the midst of all their splendour, and were so unassuming and generously kind and hospitable, that they escaped the vulgarity often ascribed to the 'newly rich.'

J—B— was a respectable citizen of London, who in a venture lost his all, and retired to the country to live quietly on a little independence belonging to his wife. He did not like this state of things; but there seemed no opening for the commencement of any business. He had some knowledge of chemistry, and a taste for making experiments with it, and thought he would begin the tanning of leather by some process of his own, and see if any money could be acquired in that way. He exhausted all his small capital, and there was no sale for his hides. An old City friend, an alderman, who possessed a country seat near the place where J—B— had set up his tanpits, heard how the leather hung on hand, and asked: 'Why not make your leather into shoes? Few persons care to buy, or know what to do with hides. Every one must wear shoes.'

The difficulty was the want of capital; but J—B—, nothing daunted, with his two sons, lads just come home from school, and the assistance of a village cobbler, set to work. The lads soon outstripped their instructor, adding intelligence to diligence, and the result was that their shoes sold faster than they could make them; and in time as their business increased they not only sold thousands of pairs throughout England, but the demand for them in Australia became very great. J—B— died a wealthy man; and his two sons carried on the business, and in time, having realised huge fortunes, sold out and retired. Unfortunately, they had no resources of amusement, or occupation in themselves, and the loss of an object to take up their time and give them an interest in the affairs of life, at length so pressed upon them, that they, at the end of a short period of this enforced idleness, repurchased at an enormous cost the factory but lately sold; and at the present time they employ at least a thousand pair of hands in the making of boots and shoes.

These instances of success in business might be multiplied to a great extent. They may be by some put down to 'luck;' but they show undoubtedly industry, perseverance, a readiness to use any opening that presents itself, and other qualities, without which no mere 'luck' would in the long-run serve any purpose. We frequently come across instances of remarkable vagaries of fortune; but in most cases there is no doubt that the secret of success may be found in the old and true axiom, 'Heaven helps those who help themselves.'

THE WELL OF ST KEYNE.

THE amusing legend of the Well of St Keyne, as told in verse by Southey, has obtained a wide-spread celebrity. The comical anecdote which we are about to relate—and which we are assured actually happened about thirty years ago—may be called a supplement to Southey's ballad, and may be taken as an instance of the wonderful readiness of woman's wit, when she happens to have a special point of self-interest in view, and which she is pre-determined to carry at all risks.

We will, for the better understanding of the story which follows, briefly state the chief points of the legend, just premising that the famous Well is situated in the parish of St Keyne, about three or four miles from the town of Liskeard, in Cornwall.

Southey's ballad opens with the following verse:

A Well there is in the West countrie,
And a clearer one never was seen;
And there's not a wife in the West countrie
But has heard of the Well of St Keyne.

A traveller, thirsty and hot, arrives one summer's day at the Well, and takes a deep draught of the cool refreshing water; and whilst he is resting, a peasant comes up to fill his pail, and earnestly regarding the stranger, at once bluntly asks him the following, apparently unaccountable questions: 'Is he a married man? Because, if so, the draught he has just imbibed is surely the happiest he has ever drunk in his life. Or has he a wife? And if so, has she ever been in Cornwall?' Adding, with much energy, this positive but curious assertion:

For if she has, I'll wager my life
She has drunk of the Well of St Keyne.

The traveller, naturally surprised and puzzled at the odd questions, replies that he has been married many years, but that his wife has certainly never been in those parts; and then desires to know what constitutes the special benefit said to be conferred upon him by drinking the water. The peasant then tells him the legend in the following pretty verses:

'St Keyne,' the Cornishman said in reply,
'Oft drank of this crystal Well,
And before the angel summoned her,
She laid on its waters a spell:

'If the husband at this gifted Well
Shall drink before the wife,
A happy man henceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

'But if the wife shall drink it first—
Lord help the husband then!—
And the traveller stooped to the Well of St Keyne,
And drank deep of its waters again!

The last two lines exhibit an amount of prudence and forethought highly to be commended on the part of the astute and cautious traveller, who, it will be observed, although he had already drunk copiously of the crystal spring, resolves to place himself entirely on the safe side, and make doubly sure, by drinking 'deep' of its waters again!

The traveller then playfully rallies the peasant, by supposing—as a mere matter of course—that he had taken care to get a drink of the water

in good time after his marriage; but was rather surprised to find that

The other replied as the stranger spoke,
And sheepishly shook his head:

'I hastened as soon as the wedding was o'er,
And I left my poor bride in the porch;
But, alas! good sir, she'd been wiser than I,
For she took a bottle to church!'

Here, then, was a specimen of sagacious forethought and ready wit, quite worthy of that dainty sex

Whom man was born to please.

But although this exhibits a brilliant idea as brilliantly and cleverly carried out by the quick-witted bride, we are inclined to think that the circumstance about to be related is quite equal to it, if not superior in some points.

The story goes that, about thirty years ago, a worthy couple having determined to enter the holy estate, and each having the usual desire to obtain the 'whip-hand' of the other for the rest of their natural lives, secretly resolved—of course unknown to the other—to follow in the footsteps of Southey's clever heroine, and, like her, each to 'take a bottle to church.'

The happy day arrived, and the wedding service was duly said, and the benediction duly pronounced. 'Now,' thought the cunning bridegroom, 'now's my time;' and was about to pull out his little bottle of magic water and drink it there and then; but being a man of some religious feeling, he thought it would be hardly decent to be seen drinking out of a bottle in church; and besides this, the friends present might think that his heart had at last failed him at the thought of the magnitude of the deed he had just committed, and that he had to fortify himself with a little 'Dutch courage;' and therefore he very properly waited till the wedding party reached the vestry, when he instantly swallowed the contents of his flask, and triumphantly exhibiting the upturned bottle to his loving bride, exclaimed with a broad grin: 'First drink, lass, first drink; now I be maister!' But what was the surprise of himself and the assembled company at seeing the fair bride quietly and demurely produce from the bosom of her dress a little bottle, with a long straw inserted through the cork, which she immediately inverted, to show that the bottle was perfectly empty, and said, with a knowing, self-satisfied smile: 'Nay, nay, Robin; first drink, first drink. It's I be maister, not thee!'

The king's well-known exclamation to Hamlet—

But see, amazement on thy mother sits,

would well have applied to the whole company assembled in the vestry at that moment. If the bride had really emptied her bottle, how and when did she do it? for nobody saw her, or had the smallest conception of her movements. Every one seemed to look for an explanation; and after a few moments of awkward silence, the bride, evidently not a little pleased with her own ready wit, proceeded to inform the company that, taking advantage of the huge poke-bonnets and full veils worn at that day, she, whilst kneeling at the end of the service, with her head bowed forward, contrived, by the help of the long straw, to drink the contents of the bottle without removing it from its hiding-place in the bosom of her dress,

or attracting the smallest notice from any one. This feat she had managed to accomplish immediately on the close of the benediction; thereby getting first drink after the marriage service had been actually finished; and thus securing—according to this most fanciful legend—that position of authority so eagerly sought for by the ladies when they have entered on the married estate.

CHRISTINE.

I SLEPT:

Long ere the sun had dropped into the West,
Long ere the birds proposed their evening rest;
Still glowed the sun in its uncoloured fire,
Still quivered heaven with the lark's desire:

And while I slept I woke

As in a conscious dream;
Methought I heard the stroke

Of rowing on the stream,

Whereon I lay rocked in an osier bed,

Kissed by the winds, on summer fragrance fed.

One only rower came,

Guiding a winged barge;

How noble was his frame,

His earnest eyes how large!

He gently steered his barge to where I lay;

He fondly touched my lips, and looked away

On the fast-dying day,

And wept.

His flowing hair, of deeply-clustering gold,
Was wet with evening dews; his brow was old
With eager thought; his eyes were globes of light,
That pierced with joy the universal night.

He lowly bent and spake

Soft whispers in my ear:

Strange that his breath should wake

A sense of longing fear!

'I love thee; wake; embrace me, fair Christine.

I came from far to know, to woo, to win.

I love thee; wake; arise

From out thy golden sleep;

I will anoint thine eyes

With salve; but cease thy sleep.'

He kissed my heavy eyes and wooed me till the sun

Rolled to the sea; till love's fond sand had run.

He turned him to the sea:

'Farewell, Christine, to thee.'

I woke

With his last word,

And cried through tears and with uplifted hands:

'Come back, beloved; why to distant lands

Row thy lone way? Oh! come and breathe again

Thy perfumed words, spoke this time not in vain.

'Come back!' but the wide vales

Return my yearning cry:

'Come back!' but far he sails;

He heeds not my sad cry.

'Oh! come again, great stranger; why depart?

Come back to heal my pierced, anguished heart.'

I saw his airy skiff

Sail up beyond the sea,

Far o'er a cloudy cliff

That overhung the sea.

And never may return the rapture of my dream?

And never may I hear or know of him?

'Come, oh! come to me.—

Oh! hush, envenomed sea.'

'Farewell, Christine, to thee.'

Would God I had awoke

Before my heart was broke.

c. c.

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CASTLE GARDEN.

ONE of the most memorable objects that arrest the attention of the European wanderer landing at New York, is the famous *dépôt* at Castle Garden. To this all emigrants must go, unless they are cabin passengers. Some do not like it, and complain that a republican government should imitate the bureaucratic inquisitiveness of the Old World. English people, whose pride is great though their fortunes are small, are often indignant at being placed in a semi-pauper category, upon reaching the land of freedom and equality. At first sight, it does look as though rich and poor were treated with painful distinctness; for cabin passengers are landed at the wharf of the Company's steamers, stewards and porters busily aiding the transport of their baggage; and officers bid them farewell with lifted caps and courteous phrases. Only when the last of these preferential persons has departed, does the steamer turn her head to the *dépôt* where steerage passengers debark. There, like a herd, are they deposited upon the shore of the promised land, not free to go where they list, but detained to answer the queries of the Emigration Commissioners, and to be advised and directed by the officials of the bureau. No wonder many are impatient of the formalities of Castle Garden; but few complain when they come to know how much the institution is of advantage to the new-comer, and how indispensable it is to his welfare.

Castle Garden *dépôt* was established in 1858, when government Commissioners were appointed to take surveillance of those landing at New York. The portentous influx of Irish people which followed the famine years of 1847-8 compelled attention. Thousands of poor ignorant creatures were shot like rubbish upon the quays of New York, to live, to die, to succeed, or to perish. The arrival of so much misery and helplessness was not reassuring to the Americans. Rude, semi-savage, hunger-bitten hordes did not promise increase of material and intellectual wealth for the United States; on the contrary, threatened

to deteriorate its society. So, nothing was done to make the situation pleasurable, in order that the inflow of ignorant poverty might be checked. The consequence was that the degeneracy, which famine created in Ireland, was intensified by the sufferings endured in New York and its neighbourhood. Desperadoes of both sexes were engendered by the squalor, vice, and helplessness abounding. Thousands who might have risen in the scale of being in the Western wilds, sank into the condition of brute beasts in the slums of the city. They preyed upon those coming from Ireland and other European countries; and after despoiling them of their all, reduced some to desperadoes like themselves, and others to maddening poverty. In this way, a criminal class of a most alarming kind was created and fostered; a class which pillaged and demoralised at will.

At the same time, the conduct of those engaged in transporting emigrants from Europe to the United States was anything but humane, and often highly culpable. Ship-owners were eager to make the utmost out of the poor beings in the steerage; officers and sailors were often debased and heartless ruffians who victimised those at their mercy. Emigrant ships were at the pleasure of the winds; for steam was only applied to mail-packets. Often the voyage occupied a month. Sanitary and moral concerns were little considered; and the physical and ethical natures of those driven by stress of circumstances from their fatherland were not a little injured by their Atlantic experiences. Immorality and disease frequently consummated the ruin began by misfortune at home. Thus it followed that the new blood pouring into America was in constant process of pollution; and a race of evil-doers was being manufactured that boded ill for present and future generations.

The tone of the lower orders of New York was profoundly affected by the demoralisation that went on for years. Nowhere in the world are there more dangerous ruffians than those now haunting the 'shady' quarters of that city. They

are capable of any crime within the scope of trained wickedness; and their invention and audacity place them in the front rank of the malefactors of the age. Beside the ruffianly marauders, there are still more baleful enemies of society, who attack it through every avenue of trade and commerce. These people employ all the resources of civilisation to destroy civilisation. Sharpened by their age and surroundings to a point of acuteness that Europe knows not—educated, refined, and lustful of costly pleasures, they carry on a war with the law-abiding that knows no truce, that is softened by no consideration for sex or suffering. In short, the predatory spirit invades the domain of administration to an extent that has made New York a by-word in the Old World and the New.

Of course it would be absurd to attribute all the moral delinquencies of New York to the deceptions and plunderings inflicted upon emigrants thirty years ago. America had scoundrels high and low long before the period referred to; but the iniquities perpetrated during the decade of 1848-58 did infinite mischief. No doubt, too, many emigrants were prone to evil in their fatherland; and some were self-deported criminals; but, withal, evil can be developed, and was developed, until the Emigration Commissioners began their noble work at Castle Garden.

In 1858, the American government recognised the important truth that it stood *in loco parentis* to the alien children swelling its family. Unless they were set to useful and reproductive employments, they would devour society parasitically. In these endless multitudes coming from the East, lay an incalculable potentiality of wealth, if energies were rightly directed. If not, the immigrants were practically an army of invaders, capable of untold misdoing. Westward lay unpeopled lands; on the quays and streets of New York, the people; join them together, and the United States would become a splendid phenomenon among the nations of the earth. And so it came about that the bureau termed Castle Garden was established to protect immigrants from sharpers in New York and along the route they proposed to travel after leaving that city. They were furnished with reliable information as to means of transport, and the probabilities of employment in every state of the Union. Officials speaking every language and dialect of Europe were upon the staff of the Commissioners, in order that all strangers might be definitely instructed in the matters it behoved them to know. Facilities were given to employers for communicating with the immigrants, by which large numbers found occupation a few hours after landing. Particular care was taken of young and unprotected females. In short, all that officialism could do for poor strangers seeking a home in a distant foreign land was done. By degrees, the great services of the bureau came to be amply recognised throughout the United

States; and much of the prosperity, thrift, and moral advance of later years is distinctly traceable to the good work done at Castle Garden.

Necessarily, a large and increasing revenue was required for this labour of economical philanthropy. It was raised by charging the Companies one dollar per head upon the emigrants landed by the various ships and steamers. Many protests were made by the Companies against what they deemed an unwarrantable tax; but for years the protests were unheeded. Nor was that the only grievance the ship-owners complained of. In England, the government had made immense demands on behalf of the emigrants quitting its shores. The ill-treatment, the frauds, the crimes inflicted upon steerage passengers, had roused parliament to come to their protection, and the Board of Trade took a rigorous oversight of the traffic. Although much remains to be done, the voyage of to-day is a pleasure-trip compared with the horrors of past days. The food supplied is abundant, and fairly well cooked; and though multitudes are confined in a small space, the steerage is infinitely more comfortable than it was fifty years ago. Now-a-days too, the voyage is reduced to a maximum of ten days, with swifter passages of eight days and even fewer.

The action of the British and American governments on behalf of emigrants has been to the advantage of ship-owners. By compelling them to treat their passengers well, and to save them from the harpies of New York, the trade has attained its present astounding proportions. An Atlantic voyage was formerly a frightful ordeal; it is now a pleasant holiday trip; and thousands of steerage passengers come from New York to Europe, where only dozens came in former times. The immense fleets employed in the trade, and the handsome incomes they earn, prove how remunerative the passenger traffic has become.

The capitation charge upon emigrants has been reduced by the authorities to fifty cents; for at length the supreme legislature of the United States admitted that the charge imposed at Castle Garden was illegal. After much disputation as to how the expense of the bureau was to be maintained, it seemed probable that it would be closed. In fact, the Emigration Commissioners had announced that Castle Garden would receive no more emigrants, and that each steam Company must discharge their steerage passengers upon their own wharfs. The cablegram reporting this produced something like consternation in England; and loud demands were made by the newspapers that some arrangements should be come to, to save a repetition of the scenes of the previous generation.

By an extension and amendment of the United States Immigration Act, which came into force on the 1st of November, the government has taken control of all its intending citizens from the port of embarkation. Each steerage passenger must have a cubical space of one hundred feet allotted to him or her between decks on steamers; and one hundred and ten cubic feet on sailing-vessels. The roof of the deck must be six feet from the floor. A fine of fifty dollars will be imposed for any breach of these regulations; and

besides, the captain may be imprisoned for six months.

Each berth must be two feet wide and six feet long, and also divided from other berths. Two relatives or friends may occupy berths without divisions; but strangers must be kept apart. This space is greater than that hitherto allowed by many European Companies, and will prevent the overcrowding which has been so loudly complained of.

There must be two ventilators for each fifty passengers, one introducing fresh, and the other removing the vitiated air from the berths. Three meals of good food must be supplied each day; and each passenger allowed four quarts of water.

The ship's company are forbidden to enter the emigrants' quarters under the penalty of one hundred dollars. Copies of this regulation are to be hung up in the steerage in the principal languages of Europe.

No 'runners' are permitted to board the vessel on arrival.

The fifty cents duty levied upon immigrants is to defray the cost of regulating the traffic, for caring for the new-comers, for relieving the distressed among them, and for the general purposes of the Act.

The collectors of customs are charged with its administration; and these will doubtless do their duty.

Many scenes has the quaintly-ugly building on the Castle Garden witnessed before it became an immigrants' dépôt. In it Lafayette was welcomed on his return to America in 1824 by the notables of the city. It was afterwards converted into a concert-hall, where Jenny Lind enchanted New-Yorkers with her nightingale notes. Upon its stage, too, Grisi, Mario, and other operatic grandees, played and sang. Its rumbling recesses have quaked at the thunder of Jullien's *monstra* orchestra. But none of its bygone scenes were so thrilling as many of those daily occurring now. The realities of life are far more wonderful than the most finished imaginings of romancers; and the visitor to Castle Garden can in an hour have any amount of proof.

Let us try to depict a few of the tableaux that now present themselves.

In a corner is seen a group that looks like the remnant of an operatic chorus, that has phantasmally returned to the abandoned theatre. Women with bright blue bodices and gleaming white linen, whose headgear blazes like a red fire, are speaking in hurried recitative to a knot of men, in long gray cloaks, slouched hats, and bandage-wrapped legs rising from sandalled feet. Their hair is long, moustaches carelessly curled, eyes glittering darkly, cheeks sallow and dirty. From time to time, one of the men bursts into the recitative with torrential speech, waving his cloak like a Roman senator, shrugging his pliant body with the most extravagant vernacular contortions. Then all join in a cadenced *finale*, gesticulate grandly, and at length subside into expectancy and silence. These people are *lazzaroni* from Naples, seeking in the New World something better than the hereditary beggary of the Old. Soon a Castle Garden official comes up to them, and explains in their own *patois* what they must do, and how they

must do. Railway tickets are given them; and they move off rejoicing, emitting a whirlwind of dulcet vowels.

As they pass from view, a strange little party of sandy-bearded, tangle-haired men, incredibly costumed and marvellously unclean, appear. With them are women, beautiful, draggled and unkempt though they be; and children looking like large-eyed cherubim, taken from an old Polish picture-gallery. They are all profoundly subdued; their eyes meet one wistfully, deprecatingly. Their speech is brief and low-spoken, in what tongue few can tell. It sounds strange to an English ear. These poor souls seem like human fossils drawn from the depths of Time, strangely incongruous in the bustling, alert, unheeding world of Castle Garden. While multitudes around them are waiting impatiently to get *en route*, they are meekly passive, contentedly ignored. Hundreds go, still they remain unperturbed. But their turn comes. A man approaches, speaks to the eldest of the group, who begins, in a humble, deprecating way, to tell his story. These people are Russian Jews, who have endured much, before persecution and despoilment forced them to fly for their lives. Hated, contemned, mocked, they have travelled the best part of half the world's diameter to this American land, seeking an abiding-place, and permission to labour and to live. They have not come with a company of their fellows, but are an isolated party, paying their own charges. By-and-by, they disappear with a guide.

Among a noisy crowd of poor Irish, is a family of six that arrest attention from their silence and appearance. Though of the same nationality as those about them, they keep apart. A patriarch of fourscore is seated upon a box. His face is wan and weary, and it hurts one like a wound to note its expression. It tells of a man torn up from the foundations of a life grown rigid, and hurled, as by an earthquake, from the ancestral hearth into the mad clangour of intolerable scenes. He has evidently suffered much on board ship; but mental anguish and a yearning for repose afflict him more than physical pain. Beside him is a woman of middle age, evidently his daughter, for her features are his own. She is well dressed and even lady-like. Anxiety is in her restless eye, her quivering lip, and her unconscious stare. She hears not the chatter going on around; her thoughts are far away. A strong, stern-looking young man stands near her, taking notes of the scene with impatient disdain. He is the eldest son of the widowed mother, the prop and pioneer of his family, ruined by agrarian anarchy. Two young girls, his sisters, and a little boy of ten or eleven, are behind him, jaded with waiting, and too sorrowful to speak. The old man was a small Squire in the south of Ireland; he has been between the hammer and the anvil; for his sympathies have been with the poor, but as a landlord he has had to defend himself against the foes of property. His daughter's husband has been killed; and with a few score pounds, the family has fled to find a temporary home in America, until better times return.

In a quiet corner, a gentle, rosy matron is talking to a young Swedish peasant girl in her own language, and offering her good terms as a domestic servant. Not far away from them is

a bustling, loud-spoken, dogmatical lady, grandly attired. She is engaging a poorly clad Irish girl to serve in her mansion near Central Park. A few years ago, this fine lady herself sat in Castle Garden waiting to be hired. She was poorer than the girl beside her. She has lived a romance since then. In the ship which brought her from Ireland was a groom, who made her acquaintance. He had a talent for betting, and New York furnished a field equal to his genius. He rose high and quickly; and after a time, gave up horses for stocks and shares, and became one of the great operators of the New York Exchange. His wife, this magnificently appointed lady, rose with him, and is now one of the 'powers' of the city. Who can say what the destiny of the girl she is hiring may be, when she is launched into the eventful life of the New World? She may marry a Silver King, a railway Colossus, a territorial Goliath, a dictator of the Corn or Cattle worlds; and as the wife of a powerful statesman, may mingle with the potentates of the Old World. She may become the mother of a President, whose fame shall thunder through history. Who can say what potentialities of intellectual and material command lie enwrapped in this poor girl, accepting service at fifteen dollars per month?

Castle Garden has been an enchanted vestibule to myriads, who have reached it in poverty, sorrow, and doubt, but who have thence started upon a path that led to wealth and power infinitely beyond their dreams. Indeed, it is chiefly those starting from the immigrants' depot that attain the grandest successes the country affords. Those who reach America in a luxurious cabin berth, and who step ashore in a gentlemanly way at the private wharf of the steam-ship owner, do not often make a permanently brilliant figure in society. The voyage to them has been a floating picnic; exquisite food, exhilarating drinks, jovial companionship, have made the whimsical, testy Atlantic not only endurable, but enjoyable. Pampered and self-satisfied, the fortune-seeker greets his adopted land, assured that such a thoroughly deserving fellow has only to ask in order to have. Luck may be his, but also bad luck. In a few months, our deserving sybarite may be working in a composite gang of negroes, Dutchmen, Irish peasants, and whisky-made madmen, upon the track of a far-West railway.

The stern discipline of the steerage, the *entrées* furnished by Castle Garden, the iron compulsions of poverty, are real preparatives for fortune in a country where work is all in all. Alas! for the man who is superfluous and disdainful of small beginnings; Castle Garden promises little delight to him. To the willing and the cheerful, and particularly to the adaptive, it opens out a prospect more promising, perhaps, than any other point of debarkation in the world. As systematic settlement progresses in America, the advantages of the bureau are enlarged; and a time may come when all who are received at Castle Garden will find situations through its instrumentality. As it is, the hazards and anxieties of emigration have been immensely reduced since the Commissioners began their humane work; and the extraordinary exodus from Europe which has marked the past two years, is in no small degree owing to the

part that Castle Garden has played in the protection and economical distribution of the millions that have been cared for during the past twenty-five years of its existence.

VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

CHAPTER XLIX.—VAL STRANGE MEETS HIS OLD FRIEND AND ENEMY AT TIMES, AND AFTER ALL THERE IS ON EACH SIDE A SOFTENED AND TENDER ESTEEM.

You remember in the famous wooing of Duncan Gray, the sly Scottish brevity of humour with which the narrator sets forth the final causes which brought the young people together. Gerard, like Duncan, was 'a lad o' grace'; but Milly's case was by no means piteous to look at. She seemed, on the contrary, to be very fairly happy; she was always good-tempered and cheerful; she made the old house bright with a sweet equable brightness. Gerard began to bethink himself—What would it look like if she left it? His mother's revelation hung in his mind a good deal; he admitted that Milly would make an ideal wife for any man happy enough to win her. Yet there was no room in his heart for any new love. He watched her as she tended his father, and warmed the old man's last dim years with a gentle and untiring love, like that of a good daughter. He watched her as she cheered his mother, and saw in her the only sunshine the sombre house held within it in these dull gray days. He thought lightly of her, and regarded her with what he felt as a deep brotherly affection, but no more.

Whilst things were at this pass, the new owner of the Grange, a handsome young bachelor, well provided with the good things of life, began to make advances, and was remarkably well received by Mrs. Lumby. Gerard's mother was one of those curiously unselfish women who find delight in others' happiness, and make no schemes for their own, and who are generally very happy in despite of fortune, perhaps because of their own unselfishness. Gerard had liked the new neighbour well enough, to begin with; and though he was slower to make friendships now than he had ever been, he manifested an unusual liking for Mr. Graham's society. But somehow—construe me this who will—he began suddenly to discern some wretched affectations in the man's manner; his whiskers offended him for one thing, and he hated to see a man part his hair in the middle and wear an eyeglass. Curiously enough, the birth of these small mislikings was contemporaneous with a seeming of desire on Mr. Graham's part to be a good deal at Lumby Hall and to inveigle Milly into private talk, and to waylay her in a chance manner in her drives, walks, and visits. A little coolness sprang up between Gerard and the new acquaintance, and once or twice Gerard greeted the casual mention of his name with chill ridicule of his smile, which was perhaps a little too frequent, or of his eyeglass, which was somewhat too transparently in the young gentleman's way. Mrs. Lumby having favoured his visits, and clearly discerned their object, was a little piqued.

'Gerard,' she said privately to him, 'you do injustice to Mr Graham. No man is altogether free of peculiarities; but he is a gentleman; he is very good to the poor; and his character is unimpeachable.'

The young fellow growled a little, admitting that all this might be true, but demanding to know what the gentleman in question saw to smirk at all day long. 'Lemonade is a very good drink in its way, no doubt,' he said with a reluctant laugh, 'but you don't always want it. What is the fellow always here for? One gets tired of him.'

'He is paying his addresses to Milly,' said the excellent woman with some warmth. 'And you must not play the part of the dog in the manger, Gerard.'

'What?' said he, with more briskness than was common with him. 'Is she going to marry that fellow?' He walked on a step or two, with a stronger feeling of dislike than ever for Mr Graham.

'I can't say how far the matter has gone,' said Mrs Lumby in answer. 'But his intentions are evident, and I hope Milly will accept him. It is high time she was settled.'

Gerard took this intimation with a worse grace than might have been expected of him. He would at least have liked, he said, to see her married to a worthy man.

'Is there anybody worthier in the field?' demanded his mother.

To that query Milly's well-wisher returned no answer.

A day came when the contemned Graham came with his smile, and after an interview with Milly, went away without it. He stayed away for a month or two; and Gerard missed him so far that at last he sent him a note asking him to join in a day's shooting. The old coldness died, and the two, without developing an heroic friendship, got on very well as neighbours, and were pleasant acquaintances.

'You get on very well with Mr Graham now, Gerard,' said his mother, with an unkind emphasis on the 'now.'

'I like him better than I did,' said the young man with perfect calm. He was by this time a Justice of the Peace, noticeable for a remarkable judicial patience in his conduct of all cases which came before him. Amongst his compeers was one Staines, a middle-aged man, a widower, and a large landowner. This was the one man whom Gerard really esteemed out of all the unpaid justices of the county, and he spoke of him with reserved warmth at home, and finally brought him to Lumby Hall pretty often. But Mr Staines began to come of his own initiative. There was very little glass in the gardens of the Hall, and his conservatories were the finest in the whole country-side. He used to send melons, pines, grapes, and what not; and as for flowers, they began to bloom all the year round. The ill-regulated Gerard began to cool towards the admirable Staines, and Mrs Lumby lost patience with him.

'Why have you quarrelled with Mr Staines?' she asked.

'We haven't quarrelled,' said Gerard quietly.

'You are not nearly so friendly as you were,' persisted his mother; and then broke out: 'You

are a dog in the manger, Gerard. You will neither marry Milly yourself nor let any one else marry her.'

'I don't want her to marry Staines, certainly,' he said with provoking calmness. 'She mustn't be a nurse all her life.' The man's five-and-forty, and has three children.'

His mother sighed, and was fast giving him up as intractable. If Milly had only shown some favour to any one of her wooers, she would have had more hope. That might stir him into action, she thought; and she even manoeuvred to make it appear that the girl had a penchant for the widower; but without effect. All these things took time, of course; and indeed four years had gone by since Val Strange had betrayed his friend. Many things which had at that time seemed impossible, had come about. Gerard had forgiven his enemy. He had done more—he had saved the enemy's life, in place of taking it. He had himself, after an awful repentance, settled down into peace of heart, or something very near it. And all this time the thought had been in his mind—vaguely at first, but clearer and more clear as time went on—that the best woman he had ever known in his life loved him, and was to be had almost for the asking.

Messrs Graham and Staines had done something between them to open his eyes to his own condition. But it was natural that in a heart so loyal, there should be much tenderness about disturbing the place of the dead. Consciously to admit a new love, had something of an air of sacrilege about it; and on the other hand there was a baseness of coxcombry about the idea of marrying Milly out of pity for her attachment—as if she could not live without him. And indeed Milly seemed happy and contented amidst the multifarious duties she laid upon herself, and looked by no means like the love-lorn maiden of the lending library. But as widower Staines grew more and more persevering in his presentations of fruit and flowers, and more exigent in his attendance at the Hall, Gerard at last became alive to the fact, that however Romance might reject the notion, he still had within him capacities for loving a second time. There were none of the old wild transports of passion in this calm affection; but it was none the less a marriageable love, and he saw it. 'I am not altogether sure that the volcanic nature of his first love had not imbued him with ideas about love and marriage in general which were hard to shake, and that finding none of the volcanic agencies at work, he declined to believe in the dictates of his own heart. But at last the Staines' affair came to a head, and the middle-aged Justice came up with a nervous smile and went away without it. And then Gerard spoke.

Milly asked for time to think, and consulted his mother. 'I am not going to be married out of pity,' she said with spirit in the course of the colloquy; and then with sudden tenderness, threw herself upon Mrs Lumby's bosom, a gentle avalanche, and asked—Could she make him happy? The mother was sure of it, had seen it for a long time. 'Speak to him of it,' murmured Milly; 'and tell me what he says, and how he says it.'

Mrs Lumby promised, and kept her promise. 'I have been blind,' said Gerard. 'I have loved her these two years past.'

That settled the matter; and the news of the result of the conference between mother and son being conveyed to Milly, she consented. They were married, and they live in a calm blessedness and confidence in each other, enduring crosses and griefs and trials like other people. A year ago, Gerard's father died, peacefully and happily, having lived to dandle an heir-male upon his knees, and to see a promise that the old house would be kept alive. The great firm prospers, and is higher in the world than ever; and Barnes still sits in the seat of Garling. Val Strange meets his old friend and enemy at times, and after all there is on each side a softened and tender esteem. The two know each other's temptations, and that is a great matter. Where storm raged, calm reigns.

I have told my tale ill indeed if it needs that I should point my moral here. The shadows I have lived with for a year grow pale and fade. The tale is told, and yet the hand is half reluctant to lay down the pen. Some day—who knows how soon?—an inexorable hand will write down *Finis* to your life's history and mine. The tale which goes before that awful word will tell of many wanderings in the dubious Primrose Way. Let us resolve in parting that it shall tell also of an honest effort to follow Duty, though she tread the rougher path on which it seems God's ordinance that she shall most often travel. We can scarce do ill, if we part with one another on those terms. And so—Farewell.

OUR MILK-SUPPLIES.

AMONGST other things in this country which have been affected by American competition, is the making of cheese and butter; and some who are disposed to grumble would allege that our rivals on the other side of the Atlantic have so cut in upon home production, as to make it little better than a losing business. In spite, however, of such an allegation, we find a steady increase in the production and consumption of home-dairy produce during recent years. Pure and good milk is one of the first necessities of every household, and how to secure the purity and richness of our milk-supply is one of the dietetic problems of modern life. The British dairy-farmer, therefore, if he knows his business, has little to fear in the trade of milk-selling and butter-making.

The agricultural returns of Great Britain for last year show an increase upon the previous year of twenty-nine thousand cows and milk-heifers. A long row of figures is required to represent the probable quantity of milk annually produced in the United Kingdom; it has been estimated at sixteen hundred and twenty-eight million gallons.

In spite of our apparently abundant home supply of dairy produce we imported butter in 1881 to the value of about eleven million pounds sterling. The largest supply—745,536 cwt.—came from Holland; France sent us 496,724 cwt.; Denmark, 279,625 cwt.; and the United States, 174,246 cwt. In the matter of cheese, the United States in the same year sent us by far the largest proportion of our total imports, or 1,244,419 cwt.; the total from all countries being 1,840,090 cwt. This immense importation of cheese from America may

be partially explained by the abundant pasturage, and the factory system of cheese-making, which has been carried on for many years. American cheese is usually made in large quantities. The farmer sends his milk to the cheese-factory, which draws its supply from the surrounding district, and which is usually large enough to receive the milk of about two thousand cows daily. The farmer is either paid for the quantity of milk which he brings, or from the general results. This system—apparently introduced from Switzerland about 1851—has spread very rapidly, so that there are now over three thousand such factories in the United States. This system was adopted in Derby in 1869, and in Stafford in 1877, on a small scale.

We have now many Dairy-supply Companies and butter-factories in England, where the cream can be separated from the morning's milk, made into butter by mid-day, and be on sale in London in the evening. Such a factory—erected at a cost of about eight hundred pounds—will consume about one thousand gallons of milk daily, and is the best defence the British farmer can make against foreign competition. Our present railway system has so revolutionised the milk-supply of our large towns as to make it possible to gather in quantities of milk from a wide district. This is an advantage, as the milk from our town dairies, where the cows get no open-air feeding, can scarcely be so wholesome as the country supply.

In addition to our supply of fresh milk, condensed milk is also largely used and manufactured. The export of this substance from Switzerland is very great, the largest proportion coming to this country. This substance is milk from which the watery particles have been artificially driven off until of the required consistence, when sugar is added, to prevent decomposition. Thus manufactured, condensed milk contains about fifty per cent. of sugar, an obvious objection to its extended use with many people. Still, where fresh cows' milk cannot be had, it is the best substitute for it, as it contains all the nutritive qualities of the milk with less water in solution. We find that even such a flourishing agricultural colony as New Zealand imported in 1880 six thousand nine hundred and forty-three packages of preserved milk, valued at ten thousand one hundred and forty-nine pounds. Pure condensed milk, which only requires the addition of water for its use, may also be had; but it must be quickly used, as decomposition rapidly sets in after the tin is opened.

We are all more or less startled when we hear that a fever epidemic has been traced to the use of tainted milk; and this taint, again, may have been traced to impure water, of which the cows may have been drinking. Fifteen cases of typhoid fever due to infected milk, occurred in twelve houses in Clapham recently; and other cases will have come within the experience of every reader. An Order of the Privy Council, called the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, has been binding since the middle of 1879 on cow-keepers and dairy-men in England and Wales, in regard to the proper sanitation of dairies and the contamination of milk. By its provisions, the mixing of the milk from a diseased cow with the other milk for sale is distinctly forbidden. It must

not be used even to feed swine until it has been boiled. The best Dairy-supply Companies are generally ready to give a guarantee as to the purity and quality of the milk sold, an analysis of the milk being made from time to time.

We have only to glance at an illustrated catalogue of Dairy Implements and Utensils, or visit an Agricultural Show, to remark the great progress made in scientific dairy-farming in recent years. Prominent among these changes is the separation of cream from milk by a 'separator,' and the making of butter by machinery driven by a steam or gas engine. There are several milk 'separators' in use, the principle of centrifugal action being the same in each. Visitors to any of our large Agricultural Shows will be familiar with the action of this machine. The milk being fed into a vessel which revolves at a high rate of speed, soon separates the cream from the milk. The particles in the vessel arrange themselves according to their specific gravities; the milk being the heavier, comes to the outside, and the cream remains inside. Looking at the revolving cylinder, the milk and cream are seen standing up in two distinct white walls round the vessel, while two brass syphons run them off as collected. By means of this machine, the cream can be separated from the morning's milk, and churned into butter by mid-day. The butter, skim-milk, and butter-milk yielded by this process are perfectly fresh and of first-rate quality. The milk has also been freed from many impurities in the process. Delay is also avoided when a 'separator' is in use, and the butter is sweeter. The use of butter-workers—which may be had of all shapes and sizes—also saves all contact with the hand. Besides the Laval, there are the Peterson and the Lefeldt Separators. The last two are German inventions; but the Lefeldt is scarcely so portable and convenient as the Laval, which was awarded the gold medal at the last Royal Agricultural Show. What is called a Danish Separator—numbers of which are in constant use in Denmark and at the Kiel butter factories—has been found very useful and effective, doing the work with a less number of revolutions than the Laval.

In this connection, it is interesting to note the results of the experiments made in 1879-81 by M. Fjord, a Swedish chemist, as to the relative value of the different methods of separating the cream from the milk, and the making of butter from equal quantities of milk. The systems tried were—by the Lefeldt Centrifugal Separator; a Danish Separator, on the same principle as the Lefeldt; the Swartz system of deep cans set in ice—so named after Swartz, a Swedish landowner, the inventor; and the shallow-pan system. The milk from a dairy of two hundred cows, yielding six hundred pounds, was equally divided among the three processes, for the purpose of the experiment, which was carefully conducted for a year. The result showed a balance in favour of the centrifugal system of 8·12 per cent. more butter, from the same quantity of milk set in ice on the Swartz system, and 10·70 per cent. more than the shallow-pan system. Only in the month of August was the ice-and-deep-setting-pan system superior to the centrifugal.

Since Dr Carrick showed the wonderful properties of koumiss or fermented mares' milk in

cases of pulmonary consumption or other wasting diseases, as used in the Tartar Steppes, attention has been drawn to its use and manufacture. It has been found that koumiss of a useful and valuable kind can be had from cows' milk. Most of the Dairy-supply Companies have arranged for its manufacture. For those who desire a recipe for making koumiss, we quote the following, from the *Chemist and Druggist*: Take half an ounce of grape-sugar, and dissolve it in four ounces of water; in about two ounces of milk dissolve twenty grains of Fleischmann's compound yeast (or of well-washed brewers' yeast). Mix the two in a quart champagne bottle, which should then be filled with good cows' milk to within a couple of inches of the top; cork well, securing the cork with wire or a string, and place in an ice-chest or cellar at a temperature of about fifty degrees Fahrenheit, or lower, and agitate three times a day. In three or four days, the koumiss is ready for use, and should not be kept longer than four or five days. It should be drawn so as to retain the carbonic acid gas. It is rich and creamy in appearance, is slightly acidulated, and well adapted for the purposes for which it is intended. Koumiss of a simple kind may be made by simply allowing sweet milk to stand in well-corked bottles in a cool place, away from the light, and well shaken every day, for a week in summer, or a fortnight in winter. Care should be taken when shaking it that the bottle does not burst. The lactic acid thus generated renders the prepared milk or koumiss easy of digestion.

Many Companies have been formed in recent years for the supply of milk, butter, and other dairy produce, and amongst the larger Dairy-supply Associations is the Aylesbury Dairy Company (St Petersburg Place, Bayswater, London, W.), which is well equipped with every modern appliance. How large the business is, may be guessed, when we find fifty thousand pounds paid in one year for milk and cream; and how profitable, when we find a dividend of from eight to twelve per cent. paid to shareholders. The Company boasts that it has between three or four hundred medical men of the highest eminence as customers. The quantity of milk sold in 1877 was three hundred and forty-seven thousand gallons; it had risen in 1881 to seven hundred and eighty-nine thousand six hundred and forty-seven gallons. Milk separators, and all the newest and most improved machinery, are in constant use by this Company. Whether as a result of the rise of these Dairy Companies in London, or not, the consumption of milk in the Metropolis has enormously increased.

Another very perfectly equipped dairy establishment is that of Messrs Welford & Sons, who have erected a model structure at St Peter's Park, Harrow Road, London; with branches at South Kensington, Queen's Road, Bayswater, and Maida Vale, all supplied from their Warwick Farm Dairies, Willesden. They were appointed Dairy-men to the Queen in 1876. Another Metropolitan Dairy Company has started a farm near Guildford.

Two of the best known provincial English factories are the Aldford cheese factory, belonging to the Duke of Westminster, and that of Lord Vernon at Sudbury, Derbyshire, the chief product of which is butter. At the latter there are two

Danish separators at work, a steam-churn, and butter-workers. The milk is gathered in from the farmers as in the American system, and both Lord Vernon and those who share in this co-operative system, seem satisfied with the result. The skim-milk is used to feed pigs. The saving of labour by this butter and cheese factory is very great, while all the products are sweeter and better than by the old system of setting the milk in cans until the cream rises.

Another experiment after the method of the American factory system, for the manufacture of cheese and butter and the sale of milk, skimmed and fresh, was begun at Low Row, Cumberland, in the spring of last year by Mr Thomas Carrick. The ventilation of the buildings erected by him is of the most perfect description, absolute cleanliness being maintained, while there is an abundant supply of fresh spring-water at hand. To start with, a contract was made with about forty farmers for the supply of pure and fresh milk. Each farmer was provided with a Lawrence's Refrigerator, to cool the milk to a temperature of not less than sixty degrees Fahrenheit, before despatching it in the large steel churns employed for this purpose. The milk is either creamed by means of the Laval Separator, or set in deep pans on the Swartz system. The churning is performed by steam; and the after-processes are also performed by machinery, which prevents all contact by hand. About five hundred pounds of butter were made daily at first. The fresh skimmed milk—of which there are about one thousand to fifteen hundred gallons daily—is sent for sale to the northern towns, where its excellence and utility as an article of consumption are gradually becoming known.

Not content with sending to us such a large portion of cheese and butter, many manufacturers in the United States have gone into the artificial cheese and butter line. We are inundated with 'butterine' and artificial Cheddar and Stilton, the latter kinds sold in all probability at twenty or thirty per cent. above their fair value. Dr Voelcker, on behalf of the Royal Agricultural Society, made an analysis of some of this imitation cheese, and found it quite wholesome. Yet these imitations should be sold as such; and the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society have wisely recommended 'that the Board of Trade be urged to take steps to insure that these descriptions of so-called cheese be sold under their proper designation.'

The manufacture of oleomargarine was discussed in a paper presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1881; and allusion was made to it again this year in a question to the President of the Board of Trade. In the year ending June 30, 1880, the export of oleomargarine from New York was about nineteen million pounds, the largest part of it going to Holland. The present exports are estimated at from twenty-five to thirty million per annum. This substance is made from beef-suet, disintegrated in warm water, passed through a fine sieve, melted at one hundred and twenty degrees Fahrenheit, and afterwards solidified. It is refined by subjecting it to pressure at ninety degrees Fahrenheit. When 'butterine' is the object of manufacture, the oil is mixed with ten per cent. of milk, then churned, coloured with annatto, rolled in ice, and afterwards salted.

When analysed, it is found to differ from ordinary butter only in that it contains less of soluble fats. American Cheddar is made of oil, lard, or this oleomargarine and skim-milk. The imitation is so perfect, that competent judges can scarcely determine which is the real and which the imitation cheese.

The practice of dairy-farming differs in various counties, according to the nature of the pasturage, the processes of manufacture, and the condition upon which the farms are let. The quantity and richness of the milk are also dependent on many conditions, such as, the times for milking, the kind of feeding, and the breed of cattle. It is self-evident, however, that where there is a great demand for dairy produce, scientific as distinguished from ignorant and slovenly dairy-farming is the most profitable to the farmer himself, as well as the most advantageous to the consumer.

CONJURING CONTRETEMPS.

BY AN AMATEUR.

In olden days, devotees of the black art incurred the risk of being burned as wizards or ducked as witches, according to their kind, male and female, and of receiving other unpleasant tokens of popular disfavour. In our own times, its professors make a very good thing out of it; and the public, so far from wreaking vengeance on them in life or limb, will rush to a 'magical entertainment' with greater eagerness than to almost any other minor form of amusement. But though modern conjurers are in the receipt of handsome incomes, they often meet with disagreeable little incidents in the exercise of their art. Such incidents or accidents necessarily happen to the amateur with far greater frequency than to the professional magician, for to the practised artist they should be well-nigh an impossibility. I was once talking with the celebrated conjurer Herrmann about the recent inventions of Messrs Maskelyne and Cooke and other novelties in that line, and I asked him what feat or sleight he should choose as a crucial test of a good performer. He replied: 'No feat at all; but see how he fails!'—by which he meant me rather to understand, 'see how he avoids palpable failure.' Just as an acrobat is taught how to fall in comparative safety if he 'misses his tip,' so the tyro in modern magic has it impressed upon him from the outset that he must never plead guilty to a mishap; if he cannot do what he originally intended, he must turn or twist the trick into something else.

Unrehearsed effects sometimes produce the greatest *éclat*; and seeing that it is not only the 'quickness of the hand' that deceives, according to the generally received notion, but misdirection by the eye and tongue, the ready use and perfect control of those organs are of even greater consequence than digital dexterity. The cleverest of conjurers fails at times to force the particular card he wishes, or finds his calculations otherwise upset; but he must not abandon the trick, or betray by the slightest hesitation or embarrassment that anything is wrong. As a rule, he will look so far ahead of what he is actually about, that when the moment comes for doing anything, it is already done, as far as he is concerned; and the audience

go away mystified with a sort of impression that he has executed no sleight-of-hand at all, from the absence of any parade of rapid movement or manipulation.

Nevertheless, there are certain things—for the most part involving more or less intricate mechanism, or dependent on apparatus liable to damage—which, if they fail in any degree, fail utterly, and bring the Professor to irretrievable grief. Buatier's dissolving bird-cage is an example. This is a small oblong cage about twelve inches in length by five in depth and breadth, made apparently of wire on all sides, which is held in the two hands right in front of or even amongst the audience, away from any table or screen. One, two, three! and it is gone; and the performer allows the spectators to examine him, to ascertain thereby that the cage has not been folded up flat by any means and concealed on his person. The effect is extraordinary, as the cage—innocent of the very possibility of mechanical deceit—seems to have melted into thin air under the very eyes of the audience. The explanation is, that there is a double-rotating hinge or joint in the eight corners of the brass framework, which permits it to fold together end-wise, or rather, corner-wise, in the form of a spindle, the 'wire' of the sides—really black elastic—aiding this collapse by its tension when the framework is released from the oblong shape which is maintained by the hands. Around the right wrist is fastened a strong silk cord, which passes up the arm inside the shirt, across the back and down the left arm, to be attached to a tiny ring, hidden by the ball of the thumb, at the lower and inner left-hand corner of the cage, which forms one extremity of the spindle when collapsed. This cord is of just such a length that when the hands are holding the cage in front of the chest, the arms being bent and elbows close to the sides, it is comfortably taut. Now, it will be seen that if the arms be extended, as they are suddenly and violently at the word 'Three!' the cage being instantly collapsed at the same moment, the latter must necessarily be drawn up the shirt-sleeve, where it will lie along the arm, and allow the coat to be removed by the audience without fear of detection. But it has happened more than once to the inventor himself to experience a hitch at the cuff, and to have the mortification of seeing his collapsed cage dangling ignominiously therefrom, amid the roars of all present. There is no possibility of covering such a failure; the only thing to do is to turn away as rapidly as may be, and confess to a disaster before every one has discovered its precise nature.

This 'dissolving cage' is generally exhibited empty, though there are several forms of the apparatus which may contain any number of living inmates; but these involve the use of a prepared table. Others, again, there are which have hinged sides, so arranged that the whole can be folded so flat as easily to be concealed in a pocket; the cage falls into position by the weight of its floor when lifted by the ring at the top, and is adapted for production from a borrowed hat or pocket-handkerchief, but not for vanishing. A canary is sometimes shown in Buatier's apparatus—generally an artificial and collapsible one, which is made to joggle about on a perch with a very fair semblance of life—at the distance at which it is viewed—by means of a bit of elastic

or fine spiral wire, passing from angle to angle through its body, and capable of being manipulated by the tips of the second fingers, as the hands hold the cage in position. Herrmann, one of our best prestidigitateurs, uses a dummy of this description; but with the wonderful *sang-froid* and dexterity which characterise everything he does, takes a living bird, and apparently puts it into the receptacle, with exquisitely deceptive petting and chirping. He adds a capital effect, too, by 'palming' a little roll of yellow feathers, so that the cage vanishes in a cloud and flutter of these, as though the canary itself had actually melted out of its investiture. Occasionally, I believe, a real bird is employed; and a special modification of the machine, with an extra joint in the middle of each bar of the frame, which would thus grasp the bird in an oval dilatation at the centre of the spindle when collapsed, is manufactured to admit of this being done; but the creature must be tied, or its pressing against the elastic 'wires' would reveal their real nature, and in any case one would imagine that it must be liable to injury.

That ever-popular illusion the globes of gold-fish ought to be tolerably well known by this time, since it forms part of the stock-in-trade, if not the *pièce de résistance*, of every entertainer; but perhaps some of my readers may not be aware of the *modus operandi*. A handkerchief or cloth is waved about, to show that it is empty and free from preparation; then it is held out across the hands, and a glass globe, containing water and living gold-fish, is produced from under it; and this is repeated three or four times. 'Globes' they are called in the programmes; but as a matter of fact they are very different from the aquaria for gold-fish or anemones seen in our drawing-rooms or greenhouses under that designation, being rather large glass saucers. These are fitted with tight india-rubber covers, and, so protected, lie in two large pockets opening perpendicularly in the sides of the dress-coat, or are concealed behind. The cover is removed with the handkerchief. A very effective trick, and easy of execution, but a little apt to be marred by the occasional bursting of a capsule, and consequent cascade of water and wriggling fish down the magician's leg. I have known a cover refuse to come off, too, with very embarrassing results; for, though usually not difficult of removal, they necessarily fit so tightly that it takes considerable pressure to put them on. Sometimes, by way of a surprise, a brass bowl, flaming up a foot high with coloured fire, is brought out after the fish-bowls. This is filled with tow dipped in spirits of wine, &c., and is either ignited with a lucifer-match under the handkerchief, or has a little trigger with a phosphorus arrangement inside—the latter being a very dangerous dodge, as a French conjurer found to his cost the other day, in whose breast-pocket the whole affair took fire prematurely. DeLille was once engaged in the performance of an elaborate trick, in the course of which a pigeon is thrown up in the air—or appears to be—and, with a loud explosion, changes into a balloon. The balloon of course opened by springs, which at the same time broke a glass tube containing a detonating mixture of chlorate of potash and sulphur; and the whole lay folded up in a small compass, ready for

use in the *profonde* or inside-tail-pocket. Unfortunately, he passed rather too near the corner of a table in coming forward to the front of the stage, and the audience were startled at seeing his coat-tails blown off with a bang. Whether he was injured or not, I cannot say.

I once witnessed a very ludicrous *contretemps* of a similar though less serious character. When a hat is borrowed, every one naturally expects that something unusual will presently be taken out of it; and indeed there are probably a plum-pudding, a baby, a cannon-ball, or a couple of live rabbits waiting on the *servante* or shelf behind the table to be deftly introduced; but on his way back to the platform the conjurer generally contrives to introduce something from his pockets under cover of some movement which misdirects the attention for a moment. This something may be a supply of sweets for the juveniles, a score of tin goblets, some hundreds of yards of ribbon, or the wardrobe of the aforesaid baby—all very portable in a condensed form. But perhaps nothing is so showy as a number of gaudy and apparently solid cloth balls. These balls in reality owe their spherical shape to a spiral spring in their interior which admits of their being pressed flat, so that twenty or thirty can thus be packed in a sort of rouleau and carried about the person without difficulty, being held down by threads, which are snapped by the finger in the hat. But a gentleman who was holding an entertainment in a large hall at Southampton had the misfortune to get his thread broken while the rouleau was still in its place of concealment—long before he had come to the hat trick—and balls enough to fill a large bucket immediately expanded in his tail-pocket with astonishing effect.

Rabbits, guinea-pigs, and doves are the livestock ordinarily preferred for conjuring purposes, on account of their quiet and docile nature. They are tamed and well fed, but not necessarily trained for participation in the performance; all that is required of them is, that they shall lie still until they are wanted. The best regulated of dogs will bark every now and then and reveal his whereabouts; while a cat's impulse to hold on with her claws to anything she touches in any unaccustomed position, renders the feline race undesirable as confederates. White rats, squirrels, and monkeys have all been employed, but are of too restless and inquiring a disposition to be eminently fitted for the purpose. Live snakes lend themselves very suitably to these effects, from their adaptability to a most disproportionately small space when concealed, and apparent impossibility of concealment at all when produced, not to mention the air of glamour and *diablerie* they impart. But it is not every one who cares to manipulate living snakes. When M. Herrmann was in Cairo, he procured some non-venomous serpents, in rivalry of a party of snake-charmers who were there, and used them for a time; but although he was perfectly persuaded of their harmless nature, he was sometimes seized with such a horror of them, that he was impelled to rush away, tear off the coat in which they were snugly stowed, and dash it to the ground. Even rabbits and pigeons, however, sometimes bring confusion by wriggling out of pockets prematurely, or by putting their

heads round the corner of the 'table free from all preparation,' into the box from which they have just been 'vanished' through a trap.

To injure a borrowed watch or hat while pretending to do so—to drop a ring or coin and not be able to find it again—to cause a card to 'appear' with a flourish and find it is the wrong one—or to actually burn a lady's handkerchief accidentally, instead of the substitute for which it should have been adroitly exchanged, are calamities more likely to befall the amateur from nervousness or inexperience, than the professional, and are certainly not calculated to reassure his confidence—or that of his victim—for the remainder of the evening. But there is one very annoying circumstance to which both are liable in showing tricks with cards—that is, when, at the conclusion of the trick, the person who has selected a card says: 'Oh, I have forgotten what it was!' or, 'Oh, I never looked at it!' or, worse still, names a wrong one. The whole sleight is entirely brought to nought, and through no fault of the prestidigitateur. He knows very well what the card was—knew it before it was taken; but it will not mend the matter for him to name it; and his doing so would further disclose the fact that a 'force' had been employed, and might perhaps injuriously affect his subsequent feats. This happens more frequently than might be supposed. The same thing sometimes occurs in non-observance of the date or special mark on a coin; the exact number of a quantity of objects requested to be counted privately; or a letter, word, or sentence in a book. Performers who put their trust in complex electrical or mechanical paraphernalia and the collusion of accomplices, instead of legerdemain pure and simple, have only themselves to thank when anything goes wrong.

Some time ago, at a spiritualistic *séance*—the genuine article—a fiery hand was seen waving overhead in the darkness, rushing from end to end of the room with incredible swiftness, now high, now low, and occasionally smiting people on the cheek with the cold clammy contact of a corpse. In spite of the medium's stringent injunctions that no one should move, a gentleman clutched this awful apparition as it swept past him, and, regardless of protestations and threats, refused to let it go until the lights were turned up. Then the messenger from the other world proved to be nothing more supernatural than a dirty white kid glove, rubbed with phosphorus and stuffed with wet tow; this, at the end of a thin line, was suspended from a fishing-rod which could be reduced telescopically to a length convenient for the pocket. Thus the medium could cause all manner of appalling 'manifestations' without rising from his chair.

Few things impress the spectators with a stronger sense of the magician's skill—if not uncanny dealings with the powers of darkness—than his catching between his teeth a marked bullet fired from a pistol by one of the company—they themselves having ascertained by minute inspection that the weapon has no speciality about it, and that the powder and ball with which they load it are genuine. The performer stands with his hands behind his back; careful aim is taken at him, the trigger pulled; and without stirring, he allows the marksman to step up and remove the

bullet—identified by a secret cut or mark—from his mouth—a feat well calculated to produce an astonishing effect and 'bring down the house.' M. Robert-Houdin, I believe, was the inventor, though he performed it in a different manner from that usually adopted by his successors. His pistol, powder and cap, were all destitute of guile; but the leaden bullet chosen was dexterously exchanged for one made of graphite or plumbago—ordinary pencil black-lead—and this was smashed to powder by the ramrod in pressing it home. Though he employed this illusion most successfully in his diplomatic mission to Algeria, in which he was employed by the French government to undermine, if possible, the supremacy which the marabouts by their pretended miracles had acquired over the minds of the superstitious Arabs, such a method is now considered open to two great objections. The first—a very tangible one—was demonstrated to the originator himself before the close of his career by a severe wound which he received, owing to the fragments of the brittle ball not having been sufficiently stamped to powder. The other lies in the fact that, although a real bullet is selected by the spectator, it must be placed in the conjurer's hand for introduction into the firearm, in order to admit of the substitution; for the nature of the black-lead missile would be immediately obvious by reason of its light weight.

Mechanical pistols, not permitting examination, in which the projectile drops into a secret chamber by the action of springs on the pulling of the trigger, will be beneath the consideration of the true artist, as well as being dangerous in the highest degree. The mode of performing this surprising trick at the present day is as follows: one member of the audience places in the pistol or rifle—an ordinary one—a charge of real powder; a second is asked to choose and privately mark a real bullet from a box of such, which he himself drops into the barrel, and a third rams the whole tightly down with the ramrod, either retaining possession of the weapon from that moment, or passing it to some one else. But in the act of moving from No. 1 to No. 2—that is to say, between the introduction of the powder and the ball—the performer, while calling general attention to, and laying great stress upon the circumstance that three or four people take part in the loading and not one only, who might be a confederate, slips into the barrel a little tube about an inch in length, which slides down to the charge, and afterwards receives the bullet. This tube, closed at one end, is of just such a size, shape, and colour as to fit on the end of the ramrod, and be brought away with it without being noticeable. It is disengaged by the wizard, and the ball secured as he walks back to the stage, and is put inside the lips in readiness in the very act of showing that the mouth is empty.

The great difficulty which occurs in the execution of this feat is to induce the casual spectator to take deliberate aim at one's face; so impressed is he, as a rule, that the weapon he holds is genuinely loaded, that he hesitates to let fly at the performer, and will rather fire in the air. This of course spoils the effect altogether, unless the conjurer has presence of mind enough to pretend to catch the bullet as it falls. Houdin, who was pre-eminent for neatness and

finish, used to conclude this trick by making a long palaver about the mysterious properties of lead in extracting vital essences from the body; then firing the bullet himself at a whitewashed wall, and producing thereon a splash of red, the ball having been exchanged this time for a hollow shell of black wax filled with a blood-coloured liquid.

Robert-Houdin no doubt raised prestidigitation to the science in which it stands at the present day, when the Royal Society does not disdain to listen to speculations as to the real nature of some of its recent manifestations; and chemistry, electricity, optics, pneumatics, and most of the ologies are pressed into its service. He was the first to discard the flowing robe and other traditional paraphernalia and reduce the accoutrement of the modern sorcerer to ordinary evening dress with a skeleton table, holding that true skill lay in concealing not only 'how it is done,' but 'how it might be done.' But as an actual performer, it is questionable if he was the equal of Herrmann and several of the more modern professors. The paternal mantle has fallen upon the shoulders of M. Robert-Houdin *filis*, who, as a little boy, used to assist his father in many illusions which he created; but the son devotes his talent chiefly to the construction of exquisite automata, which he exhibits, in conjunction with sleight-of-hand, at his pretty little boudoir theatre in Paris. His countrymen seem to be born conjurers. Only a short time ago, I saw one of them execute a very pretty little trick, solely, I might say, by virtue of his being a Frenchman; a trick, at any rate, which would not have been so characteristic of an Englishman. Coming forward on the stage as the curtain rose, he made an amusing introductory speech with much characteristic gesticulation, hands extended and shoulders shrugged up to his ears; then he breathed on his gloves, and presto! they vanished. The gloves—I got it from him afterwards—had no backs to them, and were secured only by the tips of the fingers, which barely covered the nails; a piece of strong elastic ran in a hem round the margin of each and kept them in position, the end passing up the sleeve, to be attached to the back of the waistcoat. A slight flexure of the fingers, therefore, freed them and caused them to fly away with lightning rapidity; but everything depended on the palms being alone exposed, Frenchman-like, all the time. Address is much more than half the battle which the magician has to fight single-handed with the army of watchful eyes which encompass him.

A good story was going the round of the papers some months ago to the effect that Herrmann while in the River Plate was giving a private representation before the Patagonian chiefs, and, though exerting his wonderful abilities to the utmost, was somewhat annoyed at the stolidity and apparent lack of surprise with which they received the marvels displayed. Showers of gold and packs of cards were made to fall from their ears and noses, dozens of eggs from their pockets, and live canaries from their hair, and still they sat on undismayed. At last, after the entertainment was over, it was discovered that one of them had abstracted a valuable gold watch from the Professor's fob while the latter was disengaging a miraculous fowl

from the savage breast; and that the untutored mind of another had led him to improve the occasion by annexing a handkerchief and pencil-case. A very good yarn, but—like many other good yarns—absolutely untrue, and even without colourable foundation. I was there at the time.

Every one knows the dodge of thrusting a finger through a hat. A wax finger—to be bought in any toy-shop for a shilling—amputated, as it were, about the second joint, at which point it is armed with a needle, is concealed in the palm of the hand. Under cover of the hat itself, the needle is made to pierce the crown from the outside, and is then manipulated from within, giving at a little distance a very natural appearance of the forefinger thrust through and shaken derisively. Such things do not constitute tricks in themselves, but are employed by performers as interludes to keep up that general atmosphere of magic and 'nothing impossible' which should pervade their entertainments, or to divert attention for a moment from some important step. Acting on this idea, I had made as novelties, but precisely on the same principle—namely, the needle—a wand, a half-crown, a cigar, and a candle, for piercing a borrowed hat; with all of which an amateur friend was so delighted, that he borrowed them for a public performance. The finger he had before; and on the eventful night used all five with great success. 'There is no deception, you observe, ladies and gentlemen,' he insisted. 'See; it is just as easy for me to thrust this wand through, as my finger. Here is a half-crown which will penetrate with equal readiness—I will leave it half through, so that you may all see it. This cigar, as you witness, pierces it like a gimlet (a very soft felt this, sir!); we will leave it there too. Why, I shouldn't wonder if this candle—yes, actually! a common tallow candle transfixes it like a poniard! Well, I will light the candle and leave the hat in that position, while I ask some lady to be good enough to lend me;' &c. Unfortunately, he left not only the wand, cigar, half-crown, and candle sticking half through, but his finger also, when he placed the hat on his table and once more descended from the platform!

As an amateur conjurer myself, I have met with a share of ludicrous and, for the time, disagreeable incidents. Queer are the vicissitudes which befall one in out-of-the-way localities. I have performed before audiences—fairly large ones too—which could not boast of a tall hat or a white handkerchief amongst them. On one occasion, I drove fifteen miles to a country town with two big boxes of paraphernalia, only to find that a mistake had been made in the announcement, and that the already assembled audience—of a somewhat serious cast—would stand nothing more frivolous than a Lecture on Snakes—a favourite subject of mine. On another, when I was destined to occupy the second part of the evening, the first being filled by an amateur orchestral concert, I was horror-stricken when I arrived to see the local orchestra in possession of the stage where I had already 'set' my table; the big drum and double-bass banging against it, and music-books up-setting all my precious gear; while the raw mechanic's dirty thumb—the nail of which marks like a black-

lead pencil—was indelibly impressed on everything. I have given entertainments in countries where the spectators brought in eggs and dead cats with them, in readiness for anything that might not happen to please them, and where the sentiment of popular or personal disfavour finds expression through the revolver more quickly than by speech. But perhaps the most embarrassing episode that ever happened within my individual ken occurred in the south of England, where I once supplemented a bazaar in aid of some church matter or parochial charity—I forget what—with an evening performance, and the rector, who took the chair, opened the proceedings with a short prayer!

JOHN GOW, THE BUCCANEER.

A TALE OF ORKNEY.

It was in or about the year 1727 when the war-ship *Revenge*, carrying a heavy armament of guns, and commanded by Captain Gow, sailed into the harbour of Stromness. The arrival of such a formidable-looking vessel caused quite a commotion in the little seaport town, and not a little anxiety as to the intentions of the rakish-looking craft, with her motley crew of English and foreigners, who resembled pirates much more than honest Jaek-tars. But the fears of the townsfolk were for the time being quieted when the Captain of the *Revenge* landed, and announced himself to be a fellow-townsmen—one John Gow, who had run away to sea some twenty years before. Fortune had smiled on him, he said, and he now held the position of Commander of His Britannic Majesty's ship *Revenge*. This and a great deal more was told by Captain Gow to the simple townsfolk, who fêted and feasted the gallant sailor, believing implicitly what he chose to tell them, and never suspecting for a moment that the man they so hospitably entertained sailed under the Black Flag, and was one of the most noted buccancers on the high seas.

Time passed away, but still the *Revenge* lay at her moorings, and her commander—his popularity undiminished—exchanged hospitalities with the townsfolk, spending most of his time ashore, drinking, dancing, and making love; for the bold pirate was an adept at all three; and if the gentlemen declared he was the prince of good fellows at the social board, the ladies pronounced him a *preux chevalier* in the ballroom.

Days became weeks, and weeks months; rumours arose, vague at first, then more definite, and at last the fact became known, that the 'gallant Captain' did not hold His Majesty's commission, but, on the contrary, was known far and wide as 'Gow the Pirate.'

The townsfolk dared not hint their lately acquired knowledge to the Captain; but the change in their manner told its own tale, and he quickly guessed his plausible story was no longer believed. Meantime, having spent his gold freely—and being rather hard up in consequence—he

began sending parties of sailors to the neighbouring parishes, to drive off cattle and sheep, for the consumption of himself and his crew. In some instances, the farmers stoutly resisted the marauders; but they only got knocked on the head for their pains; and in a short time the utmost terror prevailed when it was known Gow or his lieutenants were going on a foraging expedition. Though the pirate punished the country-people, he spared the town-folk, perhaps from some feeling of compunction after having shared their hospitality; perhaps because it didn't suit his plans to have all the country combining against him. Be that as it may, the burgesses dwelt in safety, though they trembled in their shoes, and prayed earnestly that they might soon see the last of the *Revenge* and her roystering crew.

Matters were in this state, when one afternoon Captain Gow swaggered into the principal inn of Stromness, called for a glass of brandy, and sat down. Presently in walked Mr Halero, the Laird of Coubister, an estate some miles distant. Gow greeted him cordially, called for more brandy, remarking that a man's own company was the worst in the world, and he always drank more comfortably when he had a friend to keep him in countenance. Mr Halero, who had previously found the dashing sailor the most jovial of boon-companions, was nothing loath to pledge him in the potent liquor, which soon dispelled all remaining doubts regarding his honesty; so much so, that Laird Halero became more confidential than was prudent about his private affairs, boasted the number of his cattle, sheep, and horses, and lauded not a little the housewifely qualities of the Lady of Coubister. Her butter and cheese, he declared, were famed throughout the country-side, and she could serve up a dinner that the king himself might be proud to eat.

To this, and a great deal more, did the pirate listen, with laughter twinkling in his eyes; and when the Laird paused for lack of breath, he slapped him on the shoulder, exclaiming: 'She must be a likely dame that of yours, and worthy to be Lady of Coubister. But hark ye, friend; your Dame and you can't possibly eat all those beeves you were telling me of. So, by'r leave, I and my sea-cocks will e'en come round to-morrow and relieve you of a few; yes, and tell your lady to have a dozen cheeses and a couple of kegs of butter ready for us besides.' After this unexpected speech, he rose, nodded carelessly to Mr Halero, cocked his hat knowingly, and strode out of the tavern.

One may fancy the reflections of the Laird of Coubister when left alone. For the moment he felt stunned at the thought of the threatened raid on his house and property; but recovering himself with an effort, he paid his reckoning, called for his horse, and was soon galloping home to tell his wife how ill he had fared in his dealings with Captain Gow.

Arrived at Coubister, he hastened to the kitchen, where he found his wife engaged in baking 'mautie foals'—malt cakes—a dainty peculiar to Orkney. Tall and stately was Dame Halero, who in her youth had been a beauty and a toast. But time, though it added rather

than detracted from her dignity, had sharpened the once comely features, and thickened the shading on her upper lip.

Great was the astonishment of the Lady at seeing the Laird—she had not expected him till the morrow; but without giving her time to express it, he hurried her into the dining-room, and shutting the door, very quickly informed her what they had to expect from the pirate Captain, winding up his tale by asking what they should do.

Dame Halero, seated in the great arm-chair in the ingle neuk, scarcely seemed to have heard him, for she answered never a word, but stared into the fire, while the Laird strode up and down the room, banging the furniture, and muttering to himself. 'It's not that I'm afraid o' the rascal or his cut-throat crew,' he declared; 'but the house winna fortify; and what can I do wi' a handful o' raw country lads who can neither load a matchlock nor handle a sword? What is a man to do when he can neither fight nor flee?'

Presently this monologue was interrupted by Dame Halero, who remarked in a soothing tone: 'Ca' canny, Laird, and dinna break the chairs. It's clear to me your friend the Captain will come to the house; but it's not so clear he'll carry more awa' wi' him than a good dinner and plenty o' punch to wash it down.'

At this confident speech, the Laird halted before his wife's chair, and in an incredulous tone, asked her what she meant.

'Well,' returned she, 'if ye'll no glower at me that way, I'll tell ye what I mean. Folks say Captain Gow is no ruffian, but quite a gentleman. Now, my plan is this. We'll give him a warm welcome, and a good dinner wi' plenty o' recking punch; and after a' that, he winna hae the heart to rob us. Hey, Laird, what think ye o' that plan?'

'Think!' ejaculated her husband; 'why, I think ye're an angel, goodwife.'

The Laird and his Lady talked long and earnestly over the ways and means of furnishing out such a feast as would soften the pirate's heart, and make him forego his purpose of driving off the Coubister cattle.

After the consultation, the Dame went to the larder and thence to the kitchen, where such culinary preparations began as were seldom seen there, except it might be at Yule-tide and Hallowmas. The Laird too was busy overhauling the cellar and giving orders about the wines and spirits required on the morrow.

Next morning all were early astir at Coubister, and such preparations for good cheer were made in the dining-room as would have gladdened the heart of a *bon-vivant*. The table glittered with a goodly array of silver flagons, tankards, and trenchers, all emblazoned with the Halero crest. And while the wines of Portugal and France sparkled in tall decanters, the native brew of ale and whisky was not forgotten.

The morning had been foggy; but towards noon the mist rolled off the hills and the sun shone out gloriously. About two o'clock, Mr Halero espied a boat pulling in the direction of Houton Bay, which he soon made out to be that of Captain Gow. Hastily informing his wife of their guest's approach, he hurried to the

beach just in time to greet the pirate as he leaped ashore. Gow stared hard at the Laird, who, affecting not to perceive his astonishment, shook him heartily by the hand and welcomed him to Coubister with the greatest cordiality. Then desiring the sailors to follow, he walked with their Captain to the house, chatting all the way of the pleasure it afforded him to entertain such a capital fellow as his respected friend beside him. His wife, he declared, was even more delighted than himself, and was exerting all her culinary skill to offer such a dinner as would leave a pleasing remembrance of his visit.

The pirate captain listened with rather a grim smile to Mr Halero's polite remarks; but beyond a few words expressive of his thanks for the intended kindness of the Lady of Coubister, he preserved a stolid silence till the Laird ushered him ceremoniously into the dining-room, and begged him to rest in the great arm-chair before a blazing peat-fire. Then he laughed loud and long, and as his eyes rested on the well-spread table, exclaimed: 'Ha, Laird, so your dame is going to treat me to just such a dinner as you boasted of last night; and as I'm rather sharp-set, after pulling against the wind for the last two hours, the feast has a fair chance of having justice done to it.'

At this moment the soup was placed on the table, and the Laird, apologising for the absence of his spouse, as her presence was required in the kitchen and the servants' hall, where the sailors were by this time dining, invited his guest to place himself at the table; and then the feast began.

Both the Laird and the Captain were gallant trencher-men, and great were the gastronomic feats they that day accomplished. Small wonder was it they so earnestly devoted themselves to the pleasures of the table, for the fare was of the best, and very curious were some of the dishes—dainties peculiar to Orkney, and as such, greatly appreciated by Gow. Many a bumper did he drain to the health of his host and hostess, and often did he swear it was the best dinner he had ever eaten. Then, when the cloth was drawn, and the Laird proceeded to brew the punch for which he was famous, and which his guest declared to be the primest stuff he ever tasted—when the bottom of the punch-bowl became visible, and twilight began to deepen into darkness, the pirate Captain started to his feet, and declared his resolution, because of the hospitality he had received, not to touch anything belonging to such worthy people. But one thing he must have, before he turned his back on Coubister, and that was 'a kiss from the goodwife.'

Loud laughed the Laird at the pirate's proposal. 'Ha, ha!' chuckled he; 'easier said than done, sir.'

Away went the Laird in search of his wife, and found her, not many yards distant from the dining-room door. Laughingly, he informed her of the honour in store for her, and she in no amiable tone muttered: 'Lend me your arm, Laird, for we must not give the Captain time to change his mind.'

When the worthy pair entered the room, they found Gow standing with his back to the fire, the last glass of punch in his hand. Hastily setting down the glass, he advanced to meet

them, and bowed low to the lady, who acknowledged his politeness with a stately courtesy. He then led her forward till she stood in the full glare of the firelight. Again bowing over the hand he held, the pirate said: 'I esteem it an honour, Madam, that a high-born lady like you should so condescend to a poor sailor, who deserves nothing at your hands. Fame has not lied when it proclaimed you the stateliest of Orkney's matrons. And now, by'r leave, Madam, just one kiss, as a remembrance of this most pleasant visit.' And gallantly encircling her waist with his arm, he gave her a hearty salute. Then taking his glass of punch from the mantel-shelf, he tossed it off, crying: 'To your health, Dame Halero; may your life be long and happy! Farewell; but fear not for the bonnie beeves of Coubister; they will remain scathless; John Gow pledges his honour for their safety.—Farewell to thee too, most hospitable Laird; and when in future thou'rt in thy cups, keep a closer tongue in thy head than thou didst yesterday.'

Saying these words, the pirate Captain assumed his cloak and rapier, and placing his cocked-hat under his arm, turned again to his host and hostess, adding: 'In the years to come, if rumour deals harshly with the name of Gow, mayhap ye may speak a kind word for the roving buccaneer. Farewell; good people.'

He was gone the next moment; and immediately a shrill whistle was heard, which brought the sailors on the lawn in front of the house. Then waving his hand to the Laird and his lady—who had followed him to the door—the pirate and his men quickly disappeared in the gathering darkness.

It is needless to add, the property of the Laird of Coubister was held sacred by Gow during his sojourn in Orkney. And when he fell into the hands of justice and expiated his crimes on the scaffold, Dame Halero dropped a tear to his memory, declaring 'twere pity such a gallant gentleman had fallen on such evil days.' And the Laird declared 'it was a sin and a shame to hang so pretty a fellow, who, had he been pardoned, might have fought His Majesty's battles either on land or sea, and proved himself a loyal subject.'

LITTLE HEROES.

THE heroism of men and women is often chronicled and rewarded; but there are instances of courage and presence of mind displayed by the little heroes of the world which are equally deserving of recognition. The medal of the Royal Humane Society might, for instance, be less worthily bestowed than on the child of four years of age, who deserved it for performing a courageous act at Dunham-Massey. One day, he and some other children were playing on the banks of the canal near the Bay Malton, when a girl aged seven fell into the water. When she came to the surface, the little fellow threw himself at full length and seized her by the hair. The cries of the children attracted the attention of a passing bicyclist, who came to their assistance, and pulled the girl out of the canal. Had it not

been for the presence of mind of this courageous little fellow, the girl would in all probability have been drowned.

From Dover comes an account of a similar plucky rescue by another boy. It appears that a little girl, aged about four years, was playing in the surf on the sea-shore, when she was knocked down by a wave before she had time to get out of the way. The little fellow, named Friend, who is only about seven or eight years old, was also playing on the beach; and seeing the danger in which the little girl was placed, with great presence of mind, although not without risk, ran in and pulled her out. A coastguard came up immediately afterwards, and the girl was removed home very much exhausted.

Devonshire has the honour of producing the youthful heroine, Miss Esther Bowden, who courageously saved the life of her governess, and received the Royal Humane Society's medal and a handsome testimonial recording the circumstance. So far as we can recollect the particulars, it seems that while taking a country walk, the governess, in attempting to reach some flowers, fell into a deep pond. Our little heroine, of only eight years of age, caught her by the hair, and though dragged out of her depth herself, courageously continued her hold, and seizing some overhanging roots, called for help, until both were rescued by some one opportunely arriving on the scene.

At a pond in East Dulwich, an accident occurred, which, but for the gallantry of a boy aged eleven, named Otto Helstern, would have had fatal results. Some children were playing about the margin of the pond, when one of their number, only seven years of age, was seen to slip from the embankment into the water where it was some six feet deep. An alarm was raised by the terrified children, when our youthful hero, who had been bathing, and was proceeding home, returned to find the poor little fellow sinking for the second time, head downwards. Without waiting to divest himself of any clothing, the brave lad plunged in, and with some difficulty, owing to the mud, brought the drowning boy to land, where by this time several persons had arrived to render aid. The rescued boy remained insensible for some time, but by judicious treatment was gradually restored to consciousness, and enabled to proceed home.

Two brothers were skating in Cincinnati, and broke through the ice. While they were clinging desperately to the edge of the ice, and efforts were being made to reach them, the elder one cried out: 'Be sure and take Willie out first.' But both Willie and his generous brother were drowned.

A gallant rescue in the river Severn was effected by a lad of twelve. His companion, a boy somewhat older than himself, bathing in that river, was floating on his back, when the current carried him out into mid-stream. On finding he was out of his depth, he lost nerve, and sank in twelve feet of water. His young friend, on seeing him sink, at once swam to the spot, dived into the deep water, and succeeded not only in fetching him up, though in an unconscious state, but in swimming with him to the shore, where, assistance being at hand, the lad was brought back to consciousness.

An act of courage and devotedness on the part of another boy merits a record amongst deeds of bravery. Two children, of the ages of five and seven years, fell into the Lake of Geneva from the end of a pier. A third child, named Bataillard, thirteen years of age, who happened to be near the spot, immediately threw off his clothes, plunged into the lake, and diving, had the happiness of bringing both the drowning children safely to land.

There are many examples of youthful heroism in perils of land as in perils of water. When Paris was attacked by the allied armies, it was the pupils of the Polytechnic School who served the artillery on the heights of Montmartre, and by their well-directed fire filled the approaches to the positions with dead bodies of the enemy. Many a drummer-boy, as is well known, has acquitted himself as creditably in the hour of danger as any old campaigner. Louis Pajot, a drummer in a French battalion, was in some of the hottest affairs between the French armies and the allies. In the engagement before Valenciennes, out of twenty drummers who beat the charge, nineteen were killed. Pajot alone survived, but severely wounded. In spite of this, he continued beating the charge till the enemy were routed, which was not till about four hours after receiving his wound.

This little hero was if anything surpassed by a boy aged thirteen, the sole child of a widow. Equipped as a drummer, he marched at the head of a Republican regiment. He was cut off and surrounded by two hundred royalists. To give the alarm, he continued beating his drum. 'Cry *Vive le Roi!*' said the royalists. He preserved silence. The soldiers' guns were levelled at him. 'Cry *Vive le Roi!*' was again demanded. He beat rapidly the drum, and placing the sticks above his head, shouted: '*Vive la République!*' In a second he was a corpse.

THE HEDGEHOG—DOMESTICATED.

THIS curious-looking animal serves a distinct purpose in creation by destroying slugs, caterpillars, and numerous smaller vermin, which, though they are to a certain extent useful, are nevertheless destructive to vegetation in general. Beetles and cockroaches seem to belong to that class of insects the uses of which we find it so difficult to discover, and therefore devise every means to expel from our dwellings. The writer's house being overrun by these pests, and other efforts at extermination being useless, he applied to a farmer friend to supply him with a hedgehog; which he obtained, and has now had in his house—in a large town—about four years.

During the first year, Tommy—as the cook christened him—retired for about two months to a bed of withered grass underneath the rain-tub in the yard, according to the custom of his kind in winter. Prior to this, however, he had a plentiful supply of beetles, which might serve him to ruminate upon for many a day. He lived in a closet underneath the stairs, from which he sallied forth into his hunting-ground, the kitchen. Like other beasts of prey, this occurred during the dead hours of the night.

When beetles became scarce, however, his operations were watched by the dim gaslight, and

it was evident that he was guided more by scent than sight. He worked the floor as a pointer-dog works his field; and when he crossed the trail of a beetle, even a few inches from him, he became excited, and putting his nose to the fresh scent, followed up his prey. Further evidence of this feature was observed by his discovery of a crevice in the floor, where he exhibited a singular mode of proceeding. Discovering by smell that his game was there, he inserted his hind-leg—the front one probably being too short—and grasping with his claws, dragged out the black beetles one by one and gave them quick despatch.

But the tameness and apparent intelligence of the animal are his most interesting characteristics. The winter sleep is almost abandoned now, or is very short at the most, and in lieu thereof he comes into the kitchen at all hours, getting inside the fender, and stretching himself out before the fire for a snooze. He eats any pickings he can get, sharing the bones with the dog, lapping from his dish of water or milk, not sucking it up as a pig does.

But it is very remarkable to find him 'tapping at the door.' If, after taking a stroll in the back-yard, he finds the door of the house is shut, you hear a gentle tap, tap, tap, often repeated if you don't answer. You go and gently open the door; and the little animal actually tries to look you in the face, by turning up its nose and small pig-like eyes; which you at once interpret—'Oh, thank you; I have been waiting here for some time,' as he mounts the step and walks in.

It may be thought such an animal in the house would be dirty. Not so. When you discover any smell, the odour approaches that of musk; moreover, the children are quite familiar with it, and take it up and let it eat from their hand.

Country boys, on meeting with a hedgehog, but too often think it a duty at once to kill the poor creature, utterly ignorant, like many bigger boys and older men, of the services such animals perform in the economy of creation.

KNITTING OF STOCKINGS BY THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

Our contemporary, the *Textile Manufacturer*, says: 'The Egyptians of the present—Kopts as well as Arabs—run about with bare feet. The ancient Egyptians, on the contrary, who are now only to be seen in a dried condition in museums, possessed a very good method of knitting stockings, as is shown in the collection at the Louvre in Paris. In the grave of a mummy there were found a pair of knitted stockings, which gave the surprising evidence, firstly, that short stockings, resembling socks, were worn by the ancient Egyptians; and secondly, that the art of knitting stockings had already attained great perfection in ancient Egypt. These curious stockings are knitted in a very clever manner; and the material, fine wool of sheep, that might once have been white, is now brown with age. The needles with which the work was done must have been a little thicker than we should choose for the same purpose, and the knitting is loose and elastic. The stocking is begun just as we make the design,

only in the simplest manner, with single thread; but in the continuation of the work it is not simply plain, but fanciful. The usual border of the stocking which prevents the rolling up of the work is narrow, consisting of a row of turned loops; and the circle, the nicely-shaped heel, which is a little different from our method, show a very skilful hand. But in the point of the stocking there is a characteristic difference between the Egyptian stockings and our modern socks. While ours end in a rounded point, the Egyptian stockings run out in two long tubes of equal width, like the fingers of a glove. This strange shape is made to suit the sandals, which are furnished with a strap, fastened about the middle of the sandal; and as the strap has to be laid over the stocking, the division is needed.'

IT IS WELL.

'Is it well with thee, and with thy husband, and with the child?' And she said, 'It is well.'—2 *Kings*, iv. 26.

Yes; it is well! This evening shadowe lengthen;
Home's golden gates shine on our ravished sight;
And though the tender ties we strove to strengthen
Break one by one—at evening-tims 'tis light.

'Tis well! The way was often dull and weary;
The spirit fainted oft beneath its load;
No sunshine came from skies all gray and dreary,
And yet our feet were bound to tread that road.

'Tis well that not again our hearts shall shiver
Beneath old sorrows, once so hard to bear;
That not again beside Death's darksome river
Shall we deplore the good, the loved, the fair.

No more with tears, wrought from deep, inner anguish,
Shall we bewail the dear Hopes crushed and gone;
No more need we in doubt or fear to languish;
So far the Day is past, the journey done!

As voyagers, by fierce winds beat and broken,
Come into port, beneath a calmer sky,
So we, still bearing on our brows the token
Of tempest past, draw to our Haven nigh.

A sweet air cometh from the Shore immortal,
Inviting Homeward at the day's decline;
Almost we see where from the open portal
Fair forms stand beckoning with their smiles divine.

'Tis well! The Earth with all her myriad voices
Has lost the power our senses to enthral;
We hear, above the tumult and the noises,
Soft tones of music, like an angel's call.

'Tis well, O friends! We would not turn—retracing
The long, vain years, nor call our lost youth back;
Gladly, with spirits braced, the Future facing,
We leave behind the dusty, foot-worn track.

J. H.

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IS MERRIMENT DECLINING?

THERE is an impression prevailing that the present is a somewhat mournful period; and that as man grows wiser his capacity for mirth grows less. It is remarked that our lighter literature has lost in jocundity during the past twenty years. No one has succeeded Dickens in broad hearty humour. We have no audacious versifier like 'Ingoldsby.' No half-smiling, half-cynical humorist has followed the lead of Thackeray into the follies and vices of higher society. Eccentricity is disappearing among the less polished of the people. Cabmen, clodpoles, and costermongers neither use the quaint locutions of former times, nor do they indulge in buffooneries to the extent of their predecessors. 'Chaff' is not so pertinent as it was; badinage is less relished in the clubs; tomfooleries have become intolerable.

Many social gatherings are bankrupt of joy. The class of merry diners-out, who once set the table in a roar with their madcap sayings, funny stories, and nimble repartees, those jolly fellows are becoming historic. The survivors do not evoke the tempests of eachinnation that once shook the dinner-table. Somehow, old-style jocularity has lost its savour.

Bacchanalian songs have quite disappeared, even from the symposia of students and tavern roysterers. From negro minstrelsy, too, the fun is exhaling. The modern playwright does not add much to the gaiety of life. Typical characters have been 'used up' long ago; and the decay of oddity and eccentricity robs the dramatist of new models. A few years back, a new style of comic songs appeared, often inane in the text, but blithesome in tune. Certain sections of society were greatly entertained by them. Yet these are waning. Christmas pantomimes have delighted several generations. But at length, the 'Clown' fails to rejoice the youngsters by his grotesque ill-treatment of the Pantaloon and the police. His knavish escapades and burlesque benevolences do not evoke the delirious approbation of former

days. And the moving melodrama of Punch, which for a couple of centuries interested the youth of Europe, has lost much of its glamour for our urchins. The thin and incredulous crowd that condenses round the perambulating abode of the cynical hunchback, grows continually less; and the income of the showman dwindles portentously. For the twentieth century, it is to be feared Punch will be an archaeological reminiscence, which will furnish a theme for the learned. In our ears resound the last bursts of laughter excited by his marital unkindness and the indignation of his dog Toby.

With moribund Punch are dying those antique festivals of which he was an important, nay indispensable feature. The puppet-show goes far away into time. Railways have killed the great fairs that used to be held in every part of Europe, and which gave the international multitudes opportunities for pleasure in the intervals of business. Village 'wakes,' formerly universal in England, have fallen into desuetude. May-day brings no rejoicings as of yore. The Maypole has lost its significance, and a group of morris-dancers would astonish our present rustics as much as Harlequin and Columbine would if they performed a lilt upon the Thames Embankment. Only draymen and carters pay homage now to the genius of Spring. They adorn their steeds with gay ribbons and furnished harness, when the merry month opens. But there is something fictitious in the observance, and it will fade as the homage of the sweeps has done. The sooty pantomimists who used to dance round Jack-in-the-Green, no longer impede the traffic of London thoroughfares. An unsympathetic police bade them, with other anachronisms, 'move on' long ago. The fiery carnival of Guy Fawkes has been extinguished by the same authorities. Only here and there is the effigy of 'Guy' to be seen on the fifth of November dodging the guardian of order in the streets. Bonfires, squibs, the salvos of Lilliputian cannon, are forbidden; ay more, are voted unmeaning nuisances by the adult public.

Christmas, too, grows yearly more grave. Even the strait-laced, the dyspeptic, and the saturnine formerly agreed to be jolly and *sans souci* at that gracious season. To be hospitable and to lavish hospitalities then, was deemed an imperative duty. Kill-joys might snarl and scoff at every other festivity, but to abstain from the wassail of Yuletide was equivalent to *lèse-majesté*. Immoderate indulgence in eating, drinking, and dancing was not only allowed, but encouraged by moral custodians. For a time the machinery of society was allowed to run out of gear—misrule reigned in place of law. If we have not 'changed all that,' we have vastly modified the licensed dissipation of Father Christmas. Enjoyments are less gross, less prolonged, more intellectual, less sensual than they were 'forty years ago.'

The same may be said of the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide. They are no longer marked by drunken orgies, by ribald pleasantries, by street jokes, as of old. Not that these have quite disappeared. Roughs, blackguards, and inebriated buffoons still accentuate our holidays with the marks of coarser times. But the public is against them, and their ideas of merriment are an offence to all of higher taste.

Nor is the sombre shadow falling upon British mirthfulness absent from other European countries. Modern Frenchmen are not so gay as their fathers were. They are losing that boyish *insouciance* which made them seize pleasure without effort. Cafés are more frequented than ever; theatres are densely crowded; racetracks are black with excited spectators; and summer holidays are more enjoyed than before the era of railways; still, the face of Jacques Bonhomme has lost much of its old vivacity, and is sicklied o'er with nineteenth-century pensiveness. The old Gallic *abandon* has gone from rural and civic hearts, and an indefinable inquietude has taken its place.

Italians have not been noted for joviality at any period. Serene lassitude, puerile trivialities, varied with frenzied lottery-gambling, have marked the intervals of serious business. But the Carnival provoked such merriment as the nation was capable of, and foreign onlookers often wondered how men and women could find pleasure in the childish nonsense indulged in. Now, the Italians themselves wonder where the fun lies in silly practical jokes; and they also ask is it necessary to spend eleven days in a saturnalia which has quite lost its significance. Were it not for municipal subventions and the astuteness of interested shopkeepers and hotel proprietors, the Roman Carnival would soon cease. Even in the Eternal City, the spirit of commercial utilitarianism has penetrated, and will end by abolishing a festival which it has already condemned as ridiculous. And not only in Rome is the Carnival decaying; it is moribund in every part of the Peninsula, and indeed of the Catholic world. The number of religious holidays grows less, too. Business cannot be interrupted nowadays, when it has passed from the locality to the whole world. France, Italy, Spain, Austria, and other Catholic countries are bound by the telegraph, the Stock Exchange, and the ten thousand strands of trade, to do as Britain and America do, or take the disastrous consequences of negligence.

In the United States, where business is more developed than in England, where it is the occupation of a whole people, holidays of a formal kind are fewer than elsewhere. On the fourth of July the nation rejoices universally in the anniversary of its independence; on the first of June it commemorates its fallen heroes, who gave their lives to maintain the Union. Whatever further relaxations are indulged in are according to the taste and financial capabilities of individuals. This, indeed, is the distinction between modern and ancient times. Formerly, the people amused themselves *en masse*, and at stated periods. Nowadays, individuals take their pleasures when and where and how they please. Superficially, the inhabitants of the United States seem to be immersed in almost incessant toil. Fundamentally regarded, they are the greatest holiday-makers of the age. Rich and poor alike, when opportunity serves them, seek large and varied repose—not by hallooing in the streets, not by crowding into murderous congestions in some particular spot, but by dispersing over the whole planet.

This brings us to answer the question we started with: Is merriment declining? Fully and frankly, we say No. The quality of merriment has changed, but the quantity of it now diffused through the Caucasian family of man is greater than at any previous time. Gregarious merriment has given place to personal merriment. We do not laugh *en bloc*, as the Athenians did at the comedies of Aristophanes; but the audiences of a hundred theatres delight in the doings on board H.M.S. *Pinafore*. The merry tales which amused the idlers of the Forum and market-place are now read by millions in every place. Verbal drolleries emitted from London, New York, Melbourne, or Calcutta, are despatched in printed form to every part of the earth, and tickle the fancy of innumerable readers. Could the hurricane of laughter they provoke be concentrated, it would stun the ears of humanity more than the most stupendous clamours of the elements. Weak as the comic journals of Britain, America, and France may be at times, the quantity of real humour they create in a year is extraordinary. If we compare any good collection of *bons-mots* of the previous half-century with those appearing now, there is no disparagement of contemporary wit possible. Nor does the caricaturist's pencil lose its point. It is not so coarse as it was; but its tracings are quite as poignant to folly, sham, and pretence. The improved manners of the time are as marked in humorous literature and illustration as they are in other things; and this greater geniality is positive evidence that mankind is more wisely happy than it was. The greatest proof that amusement is desired, lies in the immense success that many of the comic periodicals have attained.

Humour partakes of the idiosyncrasy of the period, like other matters. We cannot find the fun which lay under the noses of our fathers. It has gone with the objects that produced it. The rollicking scenes of *Tom Jones* and *Roderick Random* have gone with the turbulent, sensual, and ignorant people who lived amid them. Squire Western has not a representative in the most stationary of the shires. Our fox-hunters are like men of another species. No surgeon's

mate could possibly meet with the adventures of Roderick, in our ironclads; nor is there probability of the existence of another Midshipman Easy, on board any ship in the fleet. Those who complain that Dickens has no successors, must address their grievance to history, which refuses to allow two epochs to be alike. Pickwick, the Wellers, and other worthies, belong to the age when steam was not. The amazing outbursts of enterprise which followed the invention of railways, flooded 'society' with a host of humbly-born plutocrats, whose financial dominion excited the wrath and the cynical jocularities of the privileged. But the *nouveau riches* have multiplied to such a marvellous extent that to ridicule them would be absurd. The 'caste' spirit has evaporated to an immense extent; so that a speculative 'Jeunes,' instead of being despised for seeking to rise out of a menial to a higher position, is applauded. First Lords have abolished the ruffians and tyrants who caused the woes, comic and tragic, of Marryat's heroes; and commiseration has done much to annihilate the picturesque squalor in which Lever's grotesque peasants fooled and fretted away their lives. Our recent humorists have been social reformers, the most searching and effective of all that extraordinary legion of humanitarians which have made the nineteenth century so different from its predecessors.

Education and the interfusion of town and country folks are fast erasing the quaint rurals whose psychological peculiarities were so wonderfully reproduced by George Eliot. Uncouth speech and archaic phraseology will erewhile be as rare in the village as in the city. Science is gradually destroying the superstitions which maintained romance in the country long after it had perished in the town.

As civilisation goes on reducing all classes to intellectual uniformity, amusements will necessarily change. But they will not fail. The appearance of a new school of humorists in America is evidence that laughter and smiles are not becoming obsolete. Preoccupied by the cyclopean labours of converting the wilderness into infinite cities, and eager for wealth beyond all other people, the Americans find time to enjoy the drolleries arising from the very gravity of their pursuits, and from the odd incidents arising out of the blending of many races into one people. German ponderosity and Hibernian flightiness are producing a novel sort of literature, as the two races mingle, and promise mankind incalculable entertainment when the American *genus homo* becomes more distinctive.

Considering the incessant activity of the time, the large demands made by science upon the attention of all but the lowest classes, and the serious problems arising from the profoundly modified condition of society, it would not be wonderful if fun and frolic were wholly eclipsed. We cannot be in two places at the same time; nor can we be under the influence of two moods. Joyousness depends upon favourable conditions, upon good health and kindly relations with men and things. When we find, therefore, that in spite of the rush and roar prevailing everywhere, in spite of remorseless egotisms, and of the endemic 'malady of thought,' that laughter innocent and hearty still ripples over the grim

ocean in which we swirl, we may well take courage, and believe that amusement is as much the appanage of man as labour.

But we also are legatees of the toils and tribulations of those who did in their day what we are doing now. The peace and security in which we live had to be fought for; the thousand instruments for winning food which cost us no invention, had to be pondered out by our fathers. We possess all the gains of the infinite labourers of the past, and among them the treasures of humour contained in the literatures of all peoples. Our sources of amusement are indeed inexhaustible, and our leisure abundant compared with that of former times. It is admitted that human nature is capable of indefinite improvement, and that our faculties expand with their exercise. Hence it follows that the joyous susceptibilities of our species may be expected to develop with the rest. And such we find to be the case. The higher races have the sense of humour much more acute than the lower. Savages rarely laugh. The incidents of their lives have little in them that is comical. Semi-civilised Mongolians cannot comprehend the frolicsome gaiety of the Western world. The Japanese are truly a merry race, but resemble our children rather than our youths in their amusements. Among ourselves, too, the modes and sources of humour are higher than they were. Obscenity and profanity do not evoke the laughter of our rustics, as they did even a few years ago. Idiots and mental weaklings do not furnish butts for rude jokers now. The base and the malignant may still find a ferocious pleasure in scoffing at the deformed and the odd-tempered; but the sympathies of the people are with the sufferers. Ill-natured wit is less relished than at any previous time; cruel amusements are ever growing wider asunder.

Amusements, like other things, are less violent than they were; people can enjoy fun without the strident roars of noisier times. It is not Laughter holding both his sides that relishes 'a good thing' most. We can digest a joke without any more symptoms of the process than a smile; and yet the assimilation of it into our mental being will be more complete than if we had gone through muscular paroxysms in 'getting it in.' No people enjoy the absurd more than the Americans; still they laugh less than the English. It is indeed possible to be merry in a quiet way, and that we are becoming. Our merriment is of a temperate kind, and therefore will last longer than the furious pleasures of earlier times.

A TRUE STORY OF THE OLD COACHING-DAYS.

MANY years ago, when a journey from Edinburgh to London was a matter of days instead of hours, I started to make it, for the first time in my life, in the stagecoach which I shall call the *Royal William*. I was travelling alone, inasmuch as I knew none of the other passengers; but the guard had been 'tipped' to look after me, and he did that as well and for as long as he could. It was about ten days before Christmas. I was going to pay my first visit to London, having left school 'for good' some months before. The prospect of the journey had been scarcely less delightful than that of London itself, and tedious

as it would be thought in these luxurions days, even by healthy young people such as I then was, I enjoyed it thoroughly—at least until more than half of it was over. There was snow in the air, but none on the ground, and our four 'spanking' horses took us along at ten miles an hour, including the stoppages.

All went well until we got to Yorkshire. We had for some hours been going through a snow-covered region, and our pace had consequently been somewhat diminished; but when we reached the wild moors of Yorkshire, the snow came down in blinding clouds, and darkness setting in, we lost our way. Between the drift and the darkness—for it was about five o'clock in the afternoon—we had managed to get off the high-road, and only discovered our mistake when, after much plunging and struggling on the part of the horses, and coaxing and swearing on that of the driver and guard, all of which was more exciting than agreeable, the wheels stuck fast in the snow, and the exhausted animals absolutely refused to go a step farther.

Where we were, we could not tell—it was even a matter of doubt if we were on a road at all. We could just dimly see the white moorland stretching away on every side. There were neither stars nor moon, and the pale rays from the coach-lamps, which shone coldly on the snow, extended no farther than the leaders' heads.

One passenger proposed that we should all crowd together inside the coach, then—necessity having no law—feast upon any edibles that happened to be in it, and finally try to sleep till morning. But, for several reasons, few of us cared for that plan, without first making another effort to get back to the high-road; so the guard took his horn, and two gentlemen a lantern, and they went off together to reconnoitre. In ten minutes they came back to say that they could not make anything of the situation; but that they had seen the lights of a house down in a hollow not far off, and were of the opinion that it would be better for us to try to reach it, rather than remain where we were all night. We all got out of the coach and started for the house, leaving guard and coachman behind, but promising to send them assistance when we reached our destination. The two gentlemen with the lantern guided us; and in about a quarter of an hour we reached the lodge-gates, after much parleying whereat, we were at length allowed to proceed to the house itself.

We were not astonished that the porter had been so unwilling to admit us when we discovered, as we soon did, that the house was already full of Christmas guests, most if not all of whom would be remaining over the night; for in the country in those days, flying visits were more or less impracticable in winter, and this was one of those isolated dwellings whose inmates might be kept prisoners for weeks at a time. But notwithstanding their crowd of guests, the master and mistress—whom I shall call Williams—received us very kindly, warmed us, fed us, and immediately sent off two of their own men-servants to assist the guard and driver to bring the horses to their stables.

Never were belated travellers more fortunate! Such an inundation of strangers must have been a serious inconvenience in a house already so full

of people; but Mr and Mrs Williams made us all at once feel at ease, and were very much distressed that they could only find sleeping accommodation for the ladies of our party; beds would be made up in the barns for the gentlemen, however, 'which would not,' they hoped, 'be found very uncomfortable.' The gentlemen of course were delighted with the idea, and declared their willingness to sleep anywhere—as indeed we ladies had also done.

So the evening passed on; and a very pleasant evening it was, with music and dancing—those dear old country-dances, that one never sees nowadays, when old ladies and old gentlemen danced together and looked dignified, or heartily merry, and sometimes graceful. Also, it added greatly to my enjoyment when I discovered in the course of the evening that Mr and Mrs Williams were old and warm friends of my own father and mother. Although I had never before seen them, I had heard them spoken of by my parents, who would be delighted when they got news of their old friends in so unexpected a way. In these days of railway trains and penny-posts, one need never lose sight of one's friends; but things were different then, and I knew that my father and mother were not even aware whether the Williamses were still in this world.

The gentlemen passengers retired about eleven o'clock; but the rest of us sat chatting for nearly another hour. During this time, some remarks I accidentally overheard led me to the conclusion that we ladies were just one too many for the sleeping accommodation of the house, which was not a very large one, and that Mr Williams himself intended to go and sleep in a small cottage that had once been the bailiff's, but was now unoccupied. To turn our host out of his own house, seemed really barbarous, so I entreated him to let me go instead. At first he laughed at the idea as ridiculous; but when I showed him that I was in earnest, was not the least afraid, and indeed rather enjoyed the idea of such a finish up to an adventurous day, he gave in.

When all the other guests had retired, my new friends kept me a little longer at the drawing-room fire talking about my father and mother; then Mrs Williams wrapped me up and went to the hall-door with me. There I bade her good-night; and Mr Williams, with a lantern in his hand, led the way to the cottage, which stood about a hundred yards from the house, and consisted of two rooms opening into one another. Servants had been sent to prepare the place; and with bright fires in both rooms, it looked very snug; the occupants of the barns, I thought, might be less lonely, but could not be more comfortable. The rooms were very bare; but they were clean enough to all appearance, and there in the inner one lay my bed, white and inviting. There was a chair, and a washing-stand, and a small table with a looking-glass and four lighted candles on it. Candles were lit also in the other room; and my host advised me to keep them burning through the night, so that, should I awake, I might not find myself in the dark. A further supply lay on the table.

'Now,' said Mr Williams, when we had taken a look round, 'shall I not stay, and let you

go back to the house? I am sure it would be better—in fact, the only proper thing to do.

But I would not recant, and declared that I did not anticipate things could have been made so comfortable; at which Mr Williams laughed, and, seeing that I was obdurate, yielded.

'Shall I lock you in, then, or will you keep the key yourself?' he asked.

'Lock me in, please; it sounds more secure,' I replied.

'Ah,' he said with a smile, shaking his head at the last part of my answer, and looking ready to begin the argument all over again. 'But since you will be obstinate, I will come and let you out at half-past seven.' So saying, he bade me a kindly good-night, and went out, locking the door behind him.

The door between the two rooms stood open, the fire crackled cheerily, and the candles burned brightly. On the table stood a bag, which Mrs Williams had told me contained everything necessary to my comfort.

I undressed a little, took down my hair, and began to brush it. Suddenly I was startled by a peculiar sound, seemingly quite close to me. It was a gentle clink-clink, like a chain rattling. I held my brush suspended, and listened. Pooh! What a white face was that in the glass! It must be some dog kennelled near, and Mr Williams had not thought of telling me of it. Yet I could have declared that the sound was in the cottage—in the room where I was, even! But that of course was impossible. I drew a breath, very gently, and went on brushing my hair.

There!—it came again—clink-clank—this time louder than before, and seemingly so near my back, that I looked over my shoulder almost expecting to see something. But there was nothing visible. I turned my eyes to the other room. Nothing there either, that I could see; the candles' shadows, but no other—shadows. It was nonsense to tell myself that 'it might be imagination,' for I knew it was not. I wished that I had eyes in every part of my body, especially in my back, and I began to regret that I had willed to be a prisoner, instead of keeping the power of escape in my own hands.

All was quiet again, except that I almost fancied I heard the sound of breathing. Was it possible, I wondered, that I could hear the breathing of any creature outside the cottage? Impossible, surely; *this* must be imagination; it would be myself breathing! And when people were feeling nervous—I meant frightened—their senses were not always to be depended upon!

With these reflections, I tried to shake off my fears, and went on brushing my hair. But I had never noticed before what a noisy operation this was, my boots creaked so loudly at every motion. I made haste with as little noise as possible, twisted it up, and was ready to go into bed, when the sound came again—clink-clink-clank, quite distinctly. It startled me fearfully this time. I had really, I believe, been half-hoping that it *was* imagination; but there was no doubt now. Where the sounds came from, I could not before exactly tell; now, however, I felt certain that the cause of them was not farther off than against the outside of the cottage wall behind my bed. It might be a dog; but I could

not help feeling as afraid as if it were something very different.

I got into bed. Once warmly covered up, I did feel a little more secure; but my heart still kept thumping, and instead of trying to sleep, I strained my eyes to their widest, that they might take in every corner of the place at once. Some minutes passed, and I heard no sound but a coal gently sinking, and the breathing that must be my own—or imagination—then, suddenly, clink-clank, clink-clank, loud and fast, and the next moment a man crept slowly out from under my bed!

Now, indeed, my heart leaped into my mouth! Paralysed with terror, I just lay and gazed at him. He crept along the floor towards the fire, clanking as he went; then he stood up—a tall, slightly-made, youngish man, with a dark fierce face and brilliant eyes—and leaning forward, with his back to me, he spread out his hands to the blaze; awful hands to look at; long and thin and cruel-looking—like the claws of some monster, they seemed to me; and chains hung round each wrist, rattling slightly and glittering in the fire-light, as his eyes did also.

For some moments I lay and gazed at him, scarcely breathing, expecting every instant that he would turn his head and see me. He did not; but of course I dared not stay there. Yet I seemed spellbound to the spot; and it was with a great effort of will, but without any definite idea what to do, that I managed one desperate move. I slipped out of bed, and, with my eyes fixed on the man, glided swiftly to the door, into the other room, and into the corner that was most in the shade. Had he but turned his head half an inch as I passed, he must have seen me; but he kept his eyes on the fire with an awfully hungry look—and perhaps my motions were as noiseless as I wished them to be. Once I was into the corner, he could not see me without coming into the room. But he might do that any moment; and then? I stood still and rigid, listening. I could not now see him. A long long time it seemed that he stood in the same position, then the chains clanked loudly, and I heard him walking across the floor.

He must be coming now! I thought I would have died that moment. My heart seemed to stand still. But he did not come; he had gone towards the bed, for presently I heard it creak as he lay down on the top of it. Then, after some restless moving about and rattling of the chains, all was still. I could not tell whether he had fallen asleep or not; for I dared not move, lest he should be awake. There was nothing that I could sit on, and there I had to stand with my bare feet on the uncarpeted wooden floor, with no covering but my night-dress. It was fearfully cold. If only I had had some clothes on, I thought I should not have been quite so defenceless! Then horrible thoughts came and tortured me. Perhaps the man knew I was there quite well, though he might have been asleep at first, and was just keeping me in suspense till it was his pleasure to come and pounce on me with those awful chains and claw-like hands of his.

A long time passed in this way, and then once more my heart leaped into my mouth. I heard the man get up, walk to the fire, and put on some coals. He stood there a minute, then

walked to the table, which was exactly opposite my door, but not within range of my sight, snuffed each candle, paused again a full minute, hesitating, perhaps, then walked back to the bed and lay down.

Suspense is a terrible thing; and the cold was becoming every moment more intense. Sometimes my knees bent under me, and I slid down almost to the ground; then, alarmed to find myself in so unguarded a position, I would start up again, and try to stand straight and alert—as if my poor readiness would be of any avail when things came to the worst!

So the long hours passed. The man did not get up again, and I thought he must be asleep, for when at length the fire and the candles in both rooms went out almost simultaneously, he took no notice of it, but left us in darkness. For some hours it was a darkness that might be felt; but it did not add much to my terror, for it made me feel a little safer and farther away from him.

All this passed in what seemed years instead of hours; till at last my heart gave a great bound of hope, for there, through the window, which had neither blind nor shutter, I could see lights moving about over the snow in different directions. Then all the lights came together to the door, and some one tried to open it. Alas! it was locked and the key gone, as I knew. So, after another futile attempt to open it, the lights all moved slowly away. I was afraid to go forward to the window, lest the man should see me and the torch-bearers should not; I only moved along the wall so as to be opposite to it, and waved both hands in a silent frenzy. No one saw me, and soon all the lights had quite disappeared. This disappointment almost deprived me of all the strength I had left; but I was too thoroughly terrified to faint. I was in no hurry for any such luxury, and now every moment expected that the man, roused by the noise at the door, would get up and come into my room to examine it. However, time passed on, and he did not move, only now and then the chains rattled a little, as if he were turning in his sleep.

At last the total darkness began to give way; a faint grayness came stealing through the little window. The night was not going to last for ever! Slowly the grayness grew towards light, very slowly but unceasingly, and I could dimly see every object in the room—when at last I heard footsteps outside, then the key put in the lock, and—oh, how slowly!—turned. It was my deliverer.

All the terror of the past night and the joy of the present moment seemed now suddenly crushed together and pressed upon my head. I was mad for the time, I suppose. I waited till the door was open, then fled out into the snow. 'Don't go in there!' I said in a whisper like a shriek. 'Lock the door!'

'Good heavens!' Mr. Williams exclaimed, obeying—and then he caught me up in his arms.—My hair had turned quite white.

But I did not discover that till many months afterwards, for, being ill, I had no need of a looking-glass. I learned then, too, for the first time, that my fellow-prisoner was a madman, who had escaped from an asylum some miles off.

Perishing with cold, he had crept into the cottage after the servants—who had left the key in the door—had finished their preparations, and so had not been discovered. He was a dangerous lunatic; so it was as well that I did not know that, for a madman is a greater terror to me than the most desperate of escaped convicts. The men with the torches had come in search of him.

Mr. Williams ran with me to the house, and sent three men to the cottage. They were no more than in time, as the wretched man was escaping from one of the windows just as they came up, and they had a severe struggle with him before he was overpowered. The same morning he was restored to the asylum, where he died a few weeks afterwards, worn out with an access of madness.

Ever since that time I have lived in dread of going mad. Indeed, I do not think I am always quite so sane as other people. But I am an old woman now, and I think I shall be spared worse madness. I have written this in the hope of easing my mind a little; though I can never forget that night.

THE SEAMY SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE.

FROM a Return of Judicial Statistics for the year 1881, issued by the Home Secretary, it appears that there are no fewer than seventy-one thousand six hundred and thirty-seven known thieves and depredators in England and Wales. Of these, however, only thirty-nine thousand one hundred and sixty-one are in a position to carry on active operations, the rest being in convict or local prisons. These criminals are worse than drones in the social hive. They are the Ishmaelites of society, preying upon honest people when out of prison, and supported at the public expense when in. Without reckoning the value of property stolen and not recovered during the year, we find that the cost of police and prisons in 1881 in England and Wales was nearly four millions sterling, which has to be defrayed either by direct or indirect taxation.

The halcyon days of thieving—when bands of stout fellows lived a bold and free life under the greenwood tree, and balanced the despoiling of a fat abbot by the succouring of a distressed widow; or when bold moss-troopers, Scotts or Percies or Douglasses, conducted a doughty Border raid—are for ever gone. The average thief nowadays is a very mean-spirited creature indeed. Though he has plenty of low cunning, he is not a many-sided man. He generally has but one particular 'lay,' and after serving a term of imprisonment, returns to his old haunts and habits. A 'crackman,' or housebreaker does not commit paltry shop-door thefts, while a pickpocket seldom figures in a charge of robbery by violence. Some thieves are notorious for thefts from children. Others have their peculiar vocation in snatching greatcoats from unguarded lobbies, or appropriating stray door-mats. The detective knows this, and conducts his inquiries accordingly. This officer is the abhorrence of the professional thief. The uniformed constable can be watched as he lounges leisurely along; but the detective working silently in plain clothes, often pounces on the thief when least expected.

The popular delusion that a detective was an almost supernatural being who could find out dark and mysterious crimes as if by magic, and who always turned up in the nick of time, has now nearly gone. By a fortunate chance, an officer may occasionally stumble on the thing he is looking for; but success is generally the result of patient, laborious, and often disagreeable or dangerous work. He must be cool and wary, for he has to deal with all sorts of persons. While apparently noticing nothing, he examines everything with an observant eye. Much of the information given him is utterly worthless, some of it being purposely calculated to mislead; but from such he often draws conclusions of the very opposite character to those intended by the informer. Local knowledge, and a thorough understanding of the nature and habits of each criminal in his district, are of the greatest assistance to a detective officer.

In a number of cases, however, common-sense is the best safeguard of the public against imposition. Some swindles are of such a nature that the victims choose rather to pocket their chagrin and suffer the loss in silence, than be dragged into a court to give evidence, or have their names appear in the public prints. We shall briefly describe some of these swindles, as, notwithstanding the warnings so often given in the newspapers, the imposition still goes on, and complaints by victims of the first two species have lately come under our notice.

There is the swindling Loan Company, with its commodious chambers in a good locality, and a large brass plate on the door. A speciously worded advertisement informs the needy that money on personal security can be borrowed at a moderate rate of interest. There is a delightful haziness about the paragraph, suggestive of long credit and a disinterested and philanthropic lender. The embarrassed tradesman or struggling young professional man, ashamed to let his friends know how the shoe pinches him, thinks this is the thing for him, and writes for particulars. He receives a circular showing the Company's terms, and containing a list of questions to be answered, and also containing a demand for an advance fee, varying in amount from half a guinea to two guineas. If sent, the advance fee is invariably retained; while in many cases a curt intimation is sent that the Company decline to entertain the application. When a loan is granted, a high rate of interest is charged, and the first year's interest is deducted from the loan; while the borrower is obliged to grant a bond over his house, furniture, or stock-in-trade. On these, if there is the slightest failure in giving them their pound of flesh, the Company generally foreclose at the most inconvenient time for the borrower. If a man's business is in such a state that a temporary loan can help him, and his character is good, he will seldom be at a loss for somebody who knows him to give him a friendly lift. If this is not the case, it is far better that he should give up the business, pocket his pride, and start journeyman again, than, by getting into the hands of harpies, ruin his prospects for life.

There are various mock-auctions in every large town. A decoy at the door invites the unwary passenger to walk in, as the sale, or,

as he unconsciously informs you, the 'sell,' is just going on. When an outsider does go in, a number of confederates, got up in various characters—from the clergyman in rusty black, to the countrywoman with her basket on her arm—carry on the sale briskly, and articles are rapidly sold at very low prices. If the visitor is not wary and sensible, he is sure to bid, and may possibly find himself, before he leaves, the purchaser of an antiquated old sofa, a set of rickety chairs, or a Brummagem dinner service, at double their value.

Another dodge is generally tried on retired military or naval officers. The swindler sends a letter recalling some reminiscence of mutual service in an army corps, or on board a man-of-war, a number of years ago. He mentions his vivid recollection of these happy days, and hints that he has not been over-fortunate in worldly affairs. He has been security for a friend, who has failed to meet the bill which he himself has had to pay. The last instalment is nearly due, and he is still eight or ten pounds short, while the consequences will be serious if the money is not forthcoming. Can he presume so far upon the memory of old times as to ask a small loan to tide him over the difficulty? This type of swindler possesses more than an average education, and his information regarding the antecedents of his intended dupe is curiously accurate. It is probably gathered from some old tar or discharged soldier, many of whom are extremely garrulous regarding their favourite officers or old masters.

An ingenious fraud has lately been practised in London. A tall well-dressed man, apparently a City merchant on his way home from business, is seen talking on the street to a man in workman's dress who carries a basket and some tools. The 'merchant' accosts some well-dressed passenger, and tells him the 'mechanic's' tale of want of employment and family distress. He adds that he has satisfied himself of the truth of the story, and is about to give a trifle; will the gentleman join in giving a small sum to relieve deserving necessity? The apparent respectability of the voucher often succeeds where a common begging petition would fail, and the person accosted generally gives something. A gentleman who had given a small sum, saw both swindlers issue in company from a public-house some time after. Of course, on seeing him they decamped.

A clever dodge has lately come to light, which shows how thoroughly the swindler understood those on whom he was to operate, and forms a curious commentary on the relations between servants and tradesmen. A man having the appearance of a gentleman's servant called on several tradesmen in a fashionable part of London, asking them to come to a certain house for orders for different classes of goods, at the same time throwing out a suggestion that a small gratuity for himself would be acceptable, and might not be lost by the tradesman in a distribution of further orders. In a number of instances, small sums were given; but when the shopmen attended at the place named, they found their services were not required, and that the small fees had flowed into the pocket of some clever rascal.

Swindling, though extremely annoying to the victim, often presents a comical side to the

onlooker. That our Yankee cousins are go-ahead in their rascality, as in all else, the following story will show. We all know the usefulness of an ulster in covering a rusty coat or a ragged pair of trousers, but few would have the ingenuity to make the ulster the means of supplying food, raiment, and money. A clever rogue having equipped himself in a large ulster of fashionable make, and provided himself with the indispensable handbag, entered a Chicago hotel pretty late at night. Mentioning that he had just arrived in the city, and was to leave early next morning for New York, he took a room for the night and went to bed. Early next morning, the new guest's bell was rung violently. The servant who answered it found him highly excited. His room, he said, had been entered during the night, and his only pair of trousers, containing his purse, fifteen and a quarter dollars, and a through-ticket for New York, had been stolen. The landlord was called up. The guest stamped on the floor, and used language anything but canonical. What could the landlord do? It would be in the highest degree unfortunate if his house got the reputation of being conducted in such a way that a man's trousers were not safe in his bedroom. What he and nearly a dozen subsequent landlords did was to provide a pair of new trousers, replace or lend the missing dollars—the guest did not care which—buy a ticket for some place or other, apologise, and decline payment for entertainment provided. Plying his lucrative game in various localities, the happy inventor had ere long plenty of dollars, many pairs of trousers, and railway tickets in every direction. But one landlord who had heard confidentially about the missing trousers from a puzzled brother in trade, angrily declared that his guest had brought no trousers with him, and instead of apologising and supplying money and pants, he coated his lodger's nether limbs with tar and feathers and turned him out in that condition.

Another specimen is too good to be willingly lost, for in this case the rogue was more actuated by a 'plaguy drouth' than by any criminal intent. Several 'Paisley bodies' had had a prolonged drinking-bout. Their money was done, and their credit exhausted, for the host had trusted as far as he dared; but their throats were as dry as ever. A shilling had been screwed by one out of an unwilling acquaintance; but alas! it would not go far among the lot. A bright idea struck one of the party. 'Give it to me,' said he, 'and I will double it.' It was accordingly handed over; and the 'crony' forthwith repaired to the nearest pawnshop and offered the shilling in pledge. 'Mine unelo' grinned, and thinking it some drunken wager, he laughingly offered tenpence. This was immediately accepted, and a pawn-ticket given, marked, at the pledger's request, 'A piece of silver-plate.' The pledger now returned to the public-house. His companions were at first rather dubious of the wisdom of his procedure, but were soon undeceived. He ordered some ale, and while paying the landlord, remarked to his companions on the shabbiness of the pawnbroker. The words 'Piece of plate' made the host prick up his ears. He made some inquiry, was shown the pawn-ticket, and told that an old heirloom had been sacrificed. The

innkeeper knew they were no thieves; and the upshot was that he purchased the ticket for another shilling's-worth of ale, to be immediately supplied. The rascals had the ale consumed and were off, before the publican, going to lift his 'plate' from pawn, found he had been bit.

Time and space would fail us to mention the various swindles in the shape of sham agencies, foreign lotteries, and deceptive advertisements of all kinds that are continually being forced on the notice of a gullible public. If the ingenuity now being wasted by rogues in cheating people were employed in some useful occupation, it could hardly fail of being successful; and the most likely way to induce them to take an honest course is by the public turning a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer and refusing to be imposed on.

NOTES ON CONTINENTAL TRAVEL.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

We quitted the *Point du Jour* with a pleasant impression of our brief sojourn at Montbard. The next day's halt was at Sens; and now our journey was drawing to a close, and we expected to reach Paris at night. Before doing so, however, we were destined to a second adventure. Some of our party not having seen the palace at Fontainebleau, it was arranged that we should make a detour and visit it on our way. When, late in the afternoon we reached the place, we found the whole town on the alert. The king (Louis-Philippe) was expected. He was coming, accompanied by the whole court; so that to see the palace was out of the question. 'And your reaching Paris to-night,' added the innkeeper, 'is equally impossible. Every horse on the road has been engaged for His Majesty, who always travels with a large retinue. I have excellent accommodation at your service, a well-served cuisine, the best beds. Fontainebleau is a charming sojourn, and'—

The entrance of the postillion cut short our host's loquacity. He confirmed the statement of the latter as to the improbability of being able to get horses; but added, that if we were willing to take chance and go on another *poste*, his horses would be rested and refreshed in a couple of hours, and could take us on. We accepted his offer, despite the remonstrances and grumblings of the landlord, and having ordered dinner, sallied out for a ramble while it was in preparation.

At the end of the next stage, some diligence horses were fortunately to be had; but on reaching Penthievre, we came to a full stop; not a quadruped was precurable for love or money. The entire population of the little town was in the street, eagerly looking out for the royal cortège, which was every moment expected to pass through. We had nothing for it but to await patiently that event, and then remain until some of the horses which had brought Louis-Philippe were sufficiently rested to proceed with us. The posthouse was a miserable-looking place, dirty and uninviting, so that the ladies of the party preferred staying in the carriage; the maid following the example of her mistresses, and

remaining in her seat on the rumble behind, a proceeding which, as we shall see, nearly cost her her life.

Nothing could be more amusing than the scene around us. A French crowd is always entertaining, but this was especially so, from the state of intense excitement of every man, woman, and child. Young and old, all were talking, gesticulating, giving their opinion, laying down the law. The king was of course the grand topic, the absorbing object of interest. How soon he would probably arrive, where he was at that precise moment, the conjectured number of his carriages, the incidents and reminiscences of former passages through—all were debated, canvassed, commented on, with nods, shrugs, grimaces, and contortions such as a Frenchman alone is capable of. The postillions and their horses added not a little to the animation of the scene. The latter, which were all gray, without a single exception, were fastened up against a wall opposite the posthouse, to be in readiness at a moment's warning. They were fidgety animals, tossing their heads and pawing the ground with impatience.

The French postillion—an individual now almost extinct—was as peculiar and marked among his countrymen, and in appearance as different from them as the sturdy *poissardes* of Boulogne and Dieppe are unlike their sister citizens whose business is unconnected with deep waters. Tall, heavy, and strongly built, one would have imagined him ill calculated for his calling, and in a country, too, where diminutive men predominate. The huge French postillion was often gruff and taciturn—another contrast to the natives in general; given, too, to grumbling at the end of his stage; but that is, I believe, a characteristic of the driving fraternity all over the world. He was generally good-looking; and his costume—the glazed round hat with its smart cockade, blue jacket with crimson facings, yellow leather breeches, and enormous jack-boots—set off to advantage his stalwart figure.

We were drawn up quite close to the posthouse, to be out of the way when the cortège arrived, the pole of our carriage almost touching the wall of the building. Soon after taking up this position, a little old man with a basket of cakes on his arm came up to us and asked us to buy some. He was a lean, shrivelled, little creature, with a huge pair of earrings, and a brown face like a walnut. Very neat in his person; his linen jacket and apron, with the cloth that covered his basket, were as white as snow. We did not mind him at first, but he returned often to the charge.

'Buy my cakes, ladies,' he said; 'they are excellent. First quality flour, best of butter, and such sugar and fruit! Plenty of spice too, and no stint of eggs. They melt in the mouth. Poor Marie taught me to make them—Marie, you know! My little daughter makes them too; but I never allow her to come out and sell them. She is, too young and too pretty; not so pretty, though, as Marie! Buy my cakes, my excellent cakes.'

To please the poor little man, and get rid of his importunities, we invested in some of his manufactures. They did not quite come up to his description of them, but were highly appreciated by the children to whom they were

distributed when his back was turned. He continued to patronise us, and to hover round the carriage, coming back from time to time with tidings and conjectures about the great event in expectation. There was something very peculiar in his look—a wild unsettled gleam in his eyes, and his movements were restless and abrupt. He talked perpetually, running on in a rambling incoherent way, often to himself when no one was paying attention to him. A woman who had seen him talking to us, shook her head, and said: 'Ah, poor little Jeannot! there he goes with his cakes. A worthy creature; but all wrong here, you understand,' she added, tapping her forehead; 'he was never the same since he lost his wife.'

The subject of her remarks returning to us at this moment, prevented our asking any questions. He was soon on his old theme, 'poor Marie.' It was not difficult to draw his little story from him; he told it unconnectedly, by fits and starts, and may be thus translated:

'Marie was very pretty, and she was good too—the best girl in the village. We loved each other from childhood, ah, how dearly! and we always settled to be married some day. Marie's father and mother gave their consent on condition that we should have between us a certain sum beforehand to begin our little *ménage*. We were too happy at the prospect of being united to mind any conditions, however hard; so we set to work both of us to try and increase our little store. It was no easy task. I had an old blind mother to support out of my earnings; and though Marie made cakes, and had such a winning way with her that she sold twice as much as any one else, still the purse filled slowly. Time went on, however, and we met with various pieces of good fortune. My Marie was so industrious and so clever; everything prospered with her, and with me, for her sake. We grew rich at last, so rich that the sum was nearly made up. How happy we were! and twice as fond of each other as ever. But before the year was out, ah, what a blow came! The conscription took place—I was drawn for a soldier!'

'What is to become of us now, Marie?' I cried. 'We are lost!'

'She threw her arms round my neck, and wept as if her heart would break. Then suddenly starting up, she ran into her own little room, and bringing out her purse, pressed it into my hand. "There," she sobbed; "take that, Jeannot. You have more; we can buy a substitute."

'But our marriage—our marriage, Marie!' and I wring my hands in despair.

'Well, *mon ami*, it must only be put off. We must go to work again and get more money. We are both so young, Jeannot, so very young!'

'There was no help for it. I was bought off. It took more than half our funds; and I was very down-hearted at having to begin afresh. Marie had much more courage. The year passed on, and brought joy at its close. An old uncle, a grocer at Dijon, died and left me a small legacy. Marie became mine.

'What a nice cottage we had, and how prettily it was furnished! How proud I was of my little wife, my own darling Marie! She was so good to my poor blind mother, who lived with us, and loved her dearly. Every morning she took out

her cakes to sell, and customers increased fast. Soon, however, she began to stay more at home, and instead of her pastry, she used to work at tiny caps and pinafores; and when strangers came in, she hid them away shyly and blushed like a rose. I sold wood, which I bought *en gros* round the country; and it was a profitable trade. Ah, how happy we were!

There was a great sale of trees in a forest beyond Fontainebleau, and I started off to attend it and get bargains. I promised my dear little wife to be back in a few days. She did not like me to be long away from her just then; and as for me, I could not bear to have her out of my sight. I had only been two days at the place, when they came to tell me that a boy from Penthievre had come and wanted to see me. I flew to meet him.

"Joy, joy!" he exclaimed; "you have a charming little daughter!"

"And Marie?" I cried.

"She sent me off to tell you the news and to beg you would not delay your return."

Delay indeed! The leagues seemed to lengthen before me on my road back, so great was my impatience to get home. At last I reached my own door. I pushed it open; I pressed on towards Marie's room, when a woman came out against me.

"Stop!" she said; "I have brought you the infant. Won't you look at your child?"

"Ah, it is a nice little thing," I said, kissing it;

"but I want to see Marie. Let me pass."

"No, no—not yet. Wait a minute, there's a good man. She can't see you just now; she can't indeed."

"Not see her own Jeannot?"

"No, I tell you.—Don't push by me; you will disturb her. She is not so well—she is asleep—she."

I freed myself, and rushed in. O mon Dieu! Marie!—that marble face—the flowers—those white draperies—the crucifix on her breast—the crowds in the room—my old blind mother sobbing at the bedside, her apron thrown over her face—what did it all mean? Marie, Marie! won't you speak to me? Cold—silent—still! My head turned round, my sight swam; I ran out of the house.

"Father!" cried a young girl from the crowd, running up to the little cakeman and pulling him by the sleeve, "the king is coming! See, every one is preparing. They are getting out the horses. Come away, come away!"

There was indeed a great stir. The people, chattering, clamouring, and jostling, separated to the right and left to leave a free passage. The postillions pulled off their blouses, and gave a hasty glance over their finery. But no one came; it was a false alarm.

Another tedious hour passed away. It grew very cold, and so dark that the poor little cakeman's white garments could no longer be distinguished from the dusky mass as he flitted restlessly about. At length a distant sound was heard. It grew louder, "Le roi! le roi!" passed in hoarse, awed murmurs from mouth to mouth. A sudden silence fell upon the crowd. The king's courier galloped up, and in an instant all was ready, the horses out, the postillions at their posts.

Another moment, and the long train of carriages came dashing in at full gallop—royalty always travels fast. The halt was of short duration. In less time than I have taken to describe it, the horses were changed, the lamps lit all along the line of carriages, flashing up one after another into sudden brilliancy; and the glittering cortège continued its rapid progress.

From the carriage window we looked after the dazzling cavalcade, and watched it disappearing into the darkness. Suddenly a thundering sound was heard approaching; and then came a violent crash. Our carriage was dashed forwards against the posthouse—the pole and forepart shattered by the concussion. There was a noise behind of furious struggling and plunging of horses—a feeling as if the rumble and roof of the vehicle were coming crashing in over our heads—a confusion of shrieks, oaths, and exclamations outside; while high over all the din, the piercing screams of our luckless abigail sounded in our ears.

Stunned and utterly bewildered, it was some minutes before we could make out what had happened. The first object that met our eyes on recovering from the shock was our poor maid being carried into the posthouse.

"Be calm, Mesdames," exclaimed the voice of little Jeannot, who was foremost of a sympathising crowd gathered round us; "she is not hurt, heaven be praised! only very much frightened. One of the horses is dead. Look at him, poor beast, lying stretched behind your carriage. *Chiel!* how he plunged. If Mademoiselle had not climbed up on the roof, it would have been all over with her. The driver is terribly injured. They have taken him into the house, only just alive."

It now appeared that at the moment the royal cavalcade left Penthievre, the carriage of the Duc de Beauvon was proceeding from his château in the neighbourhood, along the road to the town, with the lamps unlit. The mania for English horses was just then at its height among the young French nobility; and the week before, the Duc de Beauvon had purchased a pair of magnificent English thoroughbreds for I know not how many thousand francs. These spirited animals were now drawing the carriage, which was luckily empty. The king's courier, who was galloping considerably in front, came in the darkness into collision with the horses. They took fright; and when the train of carriages, glittering with lights and going full speed, passed them, became unmanageable, and set off at a furious pace. They followed madly along until they dashed up against our devoted carriage. The shock may be imagined! The rumble was flattened in; one of the Duke's horses, a splendid gray, striking his head with violence against the iron and fracturing his skull. The poor animal in his dying struggles leaped so high that had not the maid, with great presence of mind, scrambled up on the roof, as Jeannot described, his forefeet would have surely struck her. As it was, her escape was almost miraculous.

The Duc de Beauvon was soon on the spot. He came attended by three or four English grooms, and their lamentations over the 'gallant gray' were grievous. As for us, we were soon surrounded by all the blacksmiths of Penthievre. After a noisy consultation, they decided that by their

united efforts it would be possible to patch up our dilapidated equipage so as to enable us to proceed on our journey.

Before leaving Penthievre, we learned that the Duke's coachman, though seriously hurt, was likely to recover. The courier who had been the innocent cause of the night's disaster was the man immortalised by the pencil of Horace Vernet. It was he who, having met with a mischance while on duty with the king, was bled by the hands of his royal master. The incident is the subject of a painting in the gallery at Versailles. On this occasion, fortunately, his horse was the only sufferer.

How different was the scene of our next rencontre with Louis-Philippe! In his own palace, the lordly Tuileries, radiant with lights, and brilliant with gorgeous uniforms and sparkling diamonds, it took place. It was the 'reception' night; and here, attended by his family and courtiers, His Majesty made the round of the salons, receiving the homage of the company, ranged along for the purpose of being presented; for, unlike the ceremonial at our own court, where the sovereign stands to receive the obeisance of those defiling before 'the presence,' here at the Tuileries it was royalty that moved, the subjects that remained stationary. Our party was at a short distance from the doors, and thus some little time elapsed before the royal personages reached us in their progress down the room. First came the king, his shrewd clever face beaming with frank good-nature; and after him the queen, tall and fragile, with silver hair and careworn looks. Then followed the handsome, graceful Duc d'Orleans, with his Duchess, full of German *bonhomie* and the sensible expression that atoned for lack of beauty. How serene she looked, that happy young wife, all unconscious of what was before her—of the day, so near, when Paris was convulsed to its centre by the tidings of the carriage accident in the Bois de Boulogne that made her a widow! Well it is for us all that the future is shrouded from our eyes; and how especially well for the family of Louis-Philippe that they could not foresee the trials and reverses that were in after years to come. The Duchesse de Nemours, Princesse Clementine, and the three brothers De Nemours, D'Aumale, and Montpensier, came next. They were each attended by their households, and the same ceremony observed as in the case of the king and queen. Our names were asked by the lady or gentleman in waiting, who repeating it, presented us. All the royal family, except the Duc d'Orleans, spoke a few gracious words to each in succession as we were introduced. The Duke's aim just then was to gain popularity and to ingratiate himself with his countrymen, and with that view, his courtesies towards the English were scant. Louis-Philippe, on the contrary, treated them with marked attention.

Three days after the reception came our invitations to the court ball. A magnificent fête it was, and most conspicuous was the talent for producing effect, so peculiar to the French, in all its arrangements and decorations. The Countess of G—, one of the ladies of the bedchamber to our own Queen, was the chaperon of our party. She was at once recognised, and led up to the benches occupied by the foreign

ambassadors and the ladies-in-waiting of the French court, and thus we had the good fortune of being seated quite close to the royal family.

The supper-room that night looked like fairy-land. It was the theatre of the palace fitted up for the purpose—the stage and pit being laid out with tables, and each box forming a little separate refreshment-room. Flowers, mirrors, statues, draperies, lights, ornaments—all were combined with exquisite effect; and what made the scene strange in our eyes was, that none but ladies were present. When the signal for supper was given, our cavaliers separated from their partners and drew back, forming a lane through which the many-coloured procession—a kaleidoscope of silks and satins and velvets, flowers and feathers and gleaming jewels—moved towards the theatre.

There the effect was curious; such an assemblage of womankind, the footmen, in their gorgeous state liveries, who waited upon the fair company, being the only individuals of the opposite sex to be seen. It was a new experience to find one's self on a festive occasion making one of such a congregation of ladies. We are used to the idea of bodies of men gathered together—at public dinners and the like; but an exclusively feminine assembly was certainly a novelty. Before leaving the fairy-like theatre, we turned to take a long look at it. The departing procession—those moving wreaths of figures of every hue and tint all branching off in different ways to gain the outlets to the doors—looked like the intricate mazes of some fantastic ballet.

When the tables were re-decked, the signal for the gentlemen's supper was given. Shortly after this, the royal party retired. Departures followed each other in due succession; and soon the brilliant Tuileries were left to silence and repose.

THE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT (1882).

WHILE the attention of the public was taken up with the disturbances in Ireland and in Egypt, there was passed very quietly through both our legislative assemblies, in the ordinary session of 1882, an Act of Parliament which is destined to exert a considerable influence on the social and domestic life of this country. The short title of this Act is given above; its provisions will apply to all parts of the United Kingdom except Scotland, and it will come into force on the first of January 1883. Twenty or thirty years ago, such an Act would have been considered revolutionary; a man who had dared to advocate the views that will thus shortly become law would have been represented as a social firebrand, as an enemy to marriage, as throwing an apple of discord between husband and wife, as a disturber of the peace and the harmony of family life. Nothing of the kind, however, has occurred; Lord Selborne's Act has been accepted without any angry debate, and has been passed in a comparatively tranquil spirit.

The Married Women's Property Act (1882) is not a long or an unusually technical document; and seeing that it will affect half the families in the kingdom, we recommend the public

to buy the Act and study it for themselves. Excepting a few legal phrases here and there in the Act, the ordinary reader will be able to arrive at the meaning of this new law, which is a measure very much in favour of married women who have separate property. It does not give them power over the property of their husbands; but it does give them—what they have not had in this country before—absolute power over their own property. Under the new Act, a married woman with money (south of the Border) will be able to keep it, invest it, spend it, save it, and dispose of it by will, exactly the same as if she had remained single. Her husband will have no power to touch it or to interfere with it in any way; nor will his consent or signature in any case be necessary for its management or disposal. A wife who had consols standing in her own name before her marriage, will continue to hold them as her separate property, without settlements, and without the approval of her husband, just the same as if she were a man. If a husband and wife live apart, and the husband appropriates any of his wife's property—as is frequently the case now; for under such circumstances many a husband thinks he has a perfect right to take what belongs to his wife—it will be considered stealing, and she will be able to prosecute him as she would any other criminal who stole her property. The provisions of the Act also apply, not only to women who marry after the first of January 1883, but to all women who were married before the said date, as it has regard also to all property to which they may become entitled subsequent to the first of January 1883.

It is an Act that perhaps will affect the lower and middle classes more than it will affect the Upper Ten Thousand. For working-men and for the general trading community, it has a special interest and importance. In thousands of English homes at present, for example, the hard-working wife earns the living, sometimes bringing up a large family of children, while the husband spends his time in idleness, and in addition, not unfrequently demands money from his wife to waste on strong drink. This is a grievous wrong to a married woman, for which, as the law now stands, she can obtain no redress. In the future, all this will be altered, or at any rate if a wife submits to such treatment it will be her own fault, not the fault of the law. Her remedy will be to leave her husband. If he annoy his wife or take any money from her when they are living apart, she can protect herself by taking criminal proceedings against him.

It has been said that married women themselves, by various ways and means, will defeat the object of the new Act. In some cases, doubtless, they may do so; but we do not think that this will happen generally. Women, it would seem, are often stone-blind to the frailties or even the vices of the men whom they love; for they sometimes allow their husbands to coax or coerce them out of their property without protest or complaint. But will this be so in the future? We think not. Is not this spaniel-like submission in some measure owing to the fact that English wives know that the law of the land affords them little or no protection as regards their own money? Legally, they know that they

are nonentities; they know that their individuality is merged and lost in the individuality of their husbands. But when the law is altered, we believe that, as a general rule, married women will avail themselves of its provisions, and that they will not now, as in the past, so tamely acquiesce in being plundered of their earnings and property.

Furthermore, we have an impression that the new Act will have a very salutary effect on those husbands who, too indolent to work themselves, pillage the savings of their wives and abuse them into the bargain. To such men, more especially in large towns, the law is their only standard of right and wrong; when higher motives fail, their conduct is always influenced by the enactments on the statute-book. Indeed, speaking generally, we may say that if the law be not a reflection of public opinion, it invariably affects public opinion in this country. Now, a married woman separated from her husband is never safe without a divorce, which poor people have not the means to obtain. The husband can claim the earnings or wages of his wife as his own property; he knows that legally his wife's money belongs to him. But this will not be so under the new Act. He may coax money from his wife in the future, of course; but he cannot take it as a right; he must be content to accept it as a loan or as a gift. This, to drunken, cruel, or slotful husbands, will be quite a new experience, an experience which will be sure to have its effect on their conduct. Should they, in order to get possession of the earnings of their wives, resort to violence, then the law will grasp them with a vigorous hand. For wives with bad husbands, we regard the new Act as an unmixed blessing; and on the whole, we think it is favourable to society generally. In well-ordered homes, its probable effect will not be great; it will simply modify the marriage relationship, giving wives a more pronounced individuality of character and position.

The great principle which this Act seems to embody and enforce is, that husbands and wives may have separate as well as joint interests. Not until 1870 was this principle recognised by the English law. In that year, and again in 1874, measures were passed adopting what we may call this new social truth; and the Act of 1882 goes much further in the same direction, consolidating, amending, indeed to a great extent repealing the Acts of 1870 and 1874. Henceforth, no husband will be able to say to his wife: 'What is yours, is mine.'

Doubtless there are persons who will regard the present Act as too sweeping in its character. One of its provisions is, that a married woman may enter into contracts; that is, become a trustee, executrix, or administratrix, without the consent of her husband; a doctrine almost sufficient to make Sir William Blackstone turn in his grave. In some parts of America there is in operation the 'Cup and Saucer Act,' so called because it was said by the opponents of the measure, when it was first agitated, that if it became law, a husband would not be allowed to use his wife's teacups. That Act, however, appears to work well; and we see no strong reasons why the Married Women's Property Act should not work well in this country. To

married women it brings responsibilities as well as advantages. A wife with separate property will have to support her husband, children, and grandchildren, should they become chargeable to any union or parish; and if she carries on a trade apart from her husband, she will be subject to the bankruptcy laws. A wife who lends money to her husband for business purposes, will only have a poor chance of getting a dividend in case of his bankruptcy; for the claims of all the other creditors must be satisfied before hers. To the extent of her separate property, a married woman will be liable for all the debts she may have contracted prior to her marriage. For debts contracted after marriage by a wife having money of her own, the husband will not be liable unless she has acted as his agent. The Act provides that a married woman can sue or be sued for money independently of her husband; and as a wife can take criminal proceedings against her husband, so in like manner, when the circumstances are reversed, the husband can take criminal proceedings against his wife. The precise effect of the law as regards both married and unmarried people, remains yet to be seen; but in any case, the Act will have its uses, and will certainly remove some of the grievances under which married women have undoubtedly suffered in the past.

THE OLD CLAYMORE.

It is a matter of history how, after the battle of Culloden, the victorious soldiers ravaged the Highlands and ill-treated the inhabitants. For a long time afterwards, under the pretence of disarming them, the Highlanders were hunted and shot down like wild beasts, their habitations were burned, and their cattle and gear carried off. The record of these crimes forms such a tale of ruin and brutality, that one can scarcely believe such events have occurred in our own country within the last hundred and fifty years. Nevertheless, it was so.

Not long ago, an incident occurred to me, when on a visit to a minister in Glen Isla, which told forcibly how deep the memories of that troubled time had sunk into the hearts of the people, and how even now the anger could flash from the eyes of old men, and the blood run warm in their veins, when recalling their own reminiscences. We had returned from a day's fishing, had stowed away our rods and reels, and sat talking about the beauties of the Glen—its grand heather-covered mountains lit up by the setting sun, while the music of the rushing Isla sounded in our ears as it danced over its pebbly bed, or dashed against the big boulders which obstructed its course. Our conversation reverted to the inhabitants of the Glen; and my reverend friend informed me that a little way up there lived an old Highlander who could not be much less than ninety years old, and whose memory was still good; and that now and then, under certain circumstances, the old man would warm up and tell his tales of the old troubled days in his father's time, when Glen Isla and many another Highland valley was laid waste by a bloodthirsty soldiery.

In the cool of the evening, we strolled up to the old man's dwelling. It was an ancient cottage, situated a little way back from the road. The light played with a thousand tints among the mosses of the thickly thatched roof, and over it a thin curl of blue smoke hung lazily in the evening air. A few gnarled hawthorn trees sheltered the cottage from the blasts which swept down the mountain-sides; a patch of ground sloping down towards the river was devoted to the cultivation of cabbages, potatoes, &c.; while in front, the little garden was one blaze of flowers. High up, on the brow of the hill which formed the background, two or three goats in a semi-wild state were feeding, and stood out in bold relief against the evening sky. A little way down the road, the river Isla was arched over by an old bridge. Altogether, the spot breathed of quiet, peace, and content; and one could hardly fancy that the cruel sounds of war had ever been heard near so tranquil a spot.

As we approached the cottage, we were confronted by a boy of about ten years of age—such a little man! with neck, arms, and legs bare, and as brown as a nut; his dark hair innocent of brush and comb; and his eyes like those of an eagle—keen, piercing, determined, and intelligent. As he recognised the minister, his expression relaxed into a half-bashful smile, but quickly reverted into a somewhat distrustful look as he fixed his eye upon me, the stranger.

'Well, Alick, my man, is your grandfather in?' asked my friend.

'Ay, sir; he's ben the house,' he answered. 'Will ye please to step in?—Grandfather, here's the minister frae the manse asking for ye.'

As we entered, the old man rose with difficulty from his seat to welcome us. He pulled off his bonnet to the minister, who kindly shook hands with him. His figure was thin and bent, but wiry even now. In his younger days, he must have stood at least six feet; and his strong bony frame showed that at one time he had been a man of great strength. His face was furrowed with wrinkles, and his head was covered with a crop of snow-white hair. His eyes were gray, and the glance he directed at me was keen and proud. In a shaky voice, he asked us to sit down.

'Well, Alistair,' said the minister, 'and how are you? You're looking well. This fine warm weather agrees with you.'

'Thank ye, sir. I'm doing fine; but I'm getting auld, and I'm thinking my time must be near at hand.'

'You're quite right, Alistair, to think of what must come to us all some day or other; and you know we must all grow old in our turn, if God spares us. You, too, were young and hearty once, when your father was old and gray.'

'Deed, and that I was, sir; but it's langsyne—langsyne!'

'This, Alistair, is an old friend of mine,' said the minister, again turning to me, 'whom I have brought to shake hands with you.'

A kindlier look than I had yet seen filled his eyes as the old man bade me welcome.

'It's a long time, Alistair,' said my friend, 'since your father was laid to rest beside your mother and his two brothers in the old kirkyard; but you remember you have often told me that

his life was a more troubled one than yours has ever been; and indeed I have often wondered that he lived to such a good old age, for his stone says he was ninety-five when he fell asleep.'

The mention of his father's troubled life evidently affected him, and I could see the light gathering in the old man's eyes.

'Father had a bad time o't, minister. But I maunna say too much before strangers.'

'You need not be afraid, Alister; my friend can keep what he hears to himself, when necessary.'

'Much need, sir—much need. An idle word has cost many a man his life before now.'

My friend motioned me to keep quiet, for the old man was evidently beginning to waken up, and the cleverly directed questions were drawing him out gradually.

'And so your father was ninety-five. Well, Alister, that is a good bit more than the allotted time of most men.'

'Deed, sir, it is that; and I whiles think it was fear that kept him living so long.'

'Fear, Alister! How do you make that out? I thought your father knew nothing about fear!'

'Fear, sir!' said the old man with a flash of fire kindling in his eyes—'fear, sir! My father never knew fear; nor his father before him, nor any of his bairns. It was no the ordinary fear—it was fear that the dragoons should come again, and him not there to kill them—that was the fear that kept father livin'!'

The fire was ablaze now; the old man's blood was running warm, and his pulse beating quicker. It was a conflict between his undaunted Highland spirit and his years—a conflict in which old age for the time being was vanquished. The fountains of his memory were opened, and the old man's tongue was loosened.

He told us how his father had been 'out in the '45'—how he had fought at Culloden in the 'good cause'—how he had been defeated—and how, as a fugitive, his father, with his own hand, had slain his pursuers; and at length, wounded and weary, he had reached the cottage where we now were. He told us how the vengeance-dealing soldiers and dragoons had followed him up, and how two of his brothers had been murdered in cold blood on the 'gowan brae' at the back of the house; and how his father had to hide in a cave away among the hills—a cave into which he could only crawl backwards, and where his only sustenance for months was a skinful of cold porridge, which his little daughter managed to convey from time to time to the neighbourhood of his hiding-place, choosing a different path each time she went, so as to avoid detection. At length, he told us, the search was given up—the soldiers were withdrawn; and more dead than alive, his father struggled back, to find his home made desolate, his kinsfolk slain, and starvation staring him in the face! Years passed away; but the poor people lived in constant dread of a return of the cruel soldiers; and one day many years afterwards, a detachment of dragoons was seen coming along the road towards the bridge. 'My father saw them comin'; and single-handed he went forth to meet them. He had put on his kilt, the wearing of which had been forbidden, and took his claymore with him. When the dragoons came to the bridge, my father drew his

sword, and said: 'You shall not cross the bridge, I tell you. Come down from your horses one by one, and I will fight with you. Or come down, if you dare, two at a time, and I will fight with you. But you shall not cross the bridge!' My father stood there with his drawn claymore; and the dragoons were feared; *they laughed a laugh of fear*, and then they rode away again down the road; and my father stood there waitin'; but they never came back. Then my father came back and put away his claymore.'

Here the old man paused. Rising from his seat, he crept slowly to the door of the cottage, which he opened, and looked cautiously up and down the road. He then bolted the door of the room, and making a sign inculcating silence, he stood erect, and stretched his withered arm up to the rafters beneath the roof. From this hiding-place he pulled forth an old claymore, harked and stained. 'This,' he said, holding out the weapon with trembling hand at arm's length—'this is my father's claymore. With this he fought at Culloden; and this he has plunged into the heart of many of the bloodthirsty loons who desolated our land; and this is the claymore which frightened away the dragoons from the bridge, and would have killed every one of them, if they had dared to cross!'

The old man ceased speaking. He still stood tall and erect, with his snow-white locks falling on his shoulders, and the claymore trembling in his hand. His fiery spirit, which had sustained him during the time he was recalling the scenes of his youth, was yielding to his age; one more effort he made, and managed to put back the old claymore under the rafters; but his tough old frame was exhausted, and he sank back in his arm-chair by the fireside.

THE ART OF GOOD LIVING.

It is not in the newest work that one always finds the greatest interest, and a small octavo picked up at a bookstall has afforded us more entertainment than we should probably have found in the latest addition to Mudie's well-stocked shelves. The stall-keeper had evidently formed a hasty judgment of the book, based on the two most prominent words of the title-page, since he had carelessly thrown it into a basket with a miscellaneous array of others, attaching a label, 'Theological Works, one shilling each!' Talking up the book, curiosity was excited by noting that the volume was 'dedicated to the Right Worshipful the Court of Aldermen,' and that the author was described as 'Fellow of the Beef-steak Club, and an Honorary Member of several Foreign Picnics.' Curious to see what such a writer could find to say on theology, especially to such patrons, we purchased the volume and bore it home for careful perusal. Further examination showed that the author offered his book to the aforesaid Worshipful Court 'as a slight testimony of admiration for the capaciousness of their stomachs as well as of their understandings, and for the solidity of their heads as well as of their principles.' After this, we were not unprepared for the racy morsels that awaited us in the volume itself, of which the full title is, 'Essays: Moral, Philosophical, and

Stomachical, on the Important Science of Good Living. By Launcelot Sturgeon, Esq. London: Whittaker, 1822.

The author starts by affirming that 'a stomach which is proof against all trials is the greatest of all blessings;' and declares it would be easy to demonstrate that it exercises an extended influence over the destinies of life. Epicurism is the result of 'that choicest gift of heaven, a refined and discriminating taste;' while gluttony is a mere effort of the appetite. To assist the uninitiated in forming a refined taste, seems to be the author's aim; and in a succession of chapters he lays down what he terms 'moral maxims and reflections,' all calculated to tend in that direction. Many reasons might be assigned for dining late; but one is sufficient: that, trivial concerns being dismissed, 'all our thoughts may be concentrated on our plate, and our undivided attention bestowed on what we are eating.' No one should hurry over a good dinner, and we are amazed to learn that 'five hours are a reasonable time to remain at table;' while the author is careful to remark that 'a well-bred man never looks at his watch in company.' He who keeps dinner waiting commits an irreparable injury, and such men should be looked upon as the common enemies of society. A bad dinner admits of no palliative, for one may as well be starved as poisoned, and he who invites you to 'take pot-luck,' must bear you some latent injury. 'Beware of such perfidious friends;' and to give more forcible expression to his indignant feelings, Mr Sturgeon suggests a new reading of Horace—

This man is vile; here, Roman! fix your mark.
His sole is black!

Only one offence is worse, and that is, 'to interrupt a man in the exercise of his jaws; therefore, never make an observation that requires an answer to any one while he is eating.'

The following paragraph must be quoted entire: 'When constrained to speak, abridge all superfluous words as a waste of valuable time; thus, if you wish to take wine with any one, instead of making a formal request to that effect, just bend the body quietly, and merely say: "Honour of some wine?" and if the same broken sentence be addressed to you, make no reply, but gently bob your head and fill your glass. But if either want of appetite or want of sense should lead you into a warm discussion during dinner, don't gesticulate with your knife in your hand, as if you were preparing to cut your antagonist's throat.'

The author is careful to advise the reader to avoid being seated near any large joint, 'unless you choose to incur the risk of being forced to waste your most precious moments in carving for others instead of for yourself.' Still, if one's untoward fate should place him behind a joint, a turkey, or a goose, no mistaken ideas of politeness should induce him to part with all the choice bits before he helps himself. 'Rise above such prejudices,' is the sage advice, 'of which weak minds are alone dupes; and turn a deaf ear to every request for any particular part on which you may have set your own inclination. We remember,' proceeds our author, 'to have dined, some years ago, with a country corporation, a

very prominent member of which was placed opposite to a noble haunch of venison, which, as may easily be supposed, was in universal request. He carved it with an alacrity and disposed of it with a degree of good-humour that was truly magnanimous; until a sleek, red-faced gentleman in a bob-wig, at the other end of the table, sent his plate a second time for another slice of fat; to whom our friend, eyeing him with some disdain, replied: "Another slice of fat, indeed! No, sir! There is but one slice left that is worth eating, and you cannot be so unconscionable as to expect it." Whereupon, he very composedly helped himself to what remained. His conduct was very generally applauded; and for our own part, we conceived the highest opinion of his judgment, and have ever since held him in the greatest respect.'

Passing reluctantly by many things about invitations to dinner—which, we are told, should always be penned in the morning, fasting—we scan hastily several chapters, and glean titbits here and there. The 'moral qualities of the stomach' are dilated upon, and the author affirms that 'the greatest defect in the constitution is a bad stomach. If the stomach be unsound, the heart which is lodged in it must be corrupted.' It therefore follows, continues our facetious gastronome, 'that all abstemious people are persons of bad character.' This leads to a chapter on 'The Philosophy of the Stomach,' which opens with a learned argument in support of the proposition that a certain well-known proverb should read, 'Eat to live, and live to eat;' the writer contending that designing persons, by substituting *not* for *and*, have destroyed the meaning and the whole value of the axiom. Such persons, he adds, are only envious reformers, who, having nothing to eat themselves, would persuade us to stint our own precious stomachs, in order to ruin the revenue, and so deprive cabinet ministers of their dinners; whereas the supreme object of every good citizen should be to multiply dinners by every means in his power. The great purposes of digestion are thus amusingly described: 'Not only is it wholly destructive of all rational enjoyment to swallow down one's meat without taking proper time to comment upon its merits and expatiate upon the happiness it procures us—or, in other words, to chew it with measure and reflection, and turn it as often as a minister does a new measure of finance before he can make it palatable—but on this trituration depends not alone the ineffable pleasure to be derived from expressing and compounding the juices of the viands and the flavour of the sauces, but the important object also of their undisturbed repose during the process of digestion.'

As few of those who are old enough to appreciate the pleasures of the table possess their masticators unworn by the edge of time and service, our author finds it hard to lay down any fixed rule on this subject; but affirms, as the result of a long series of experiments, that a mouthful of solid meat requires thirty-two bites of a perfect set of teeth to prepare it for deglutition. Assuming that these requisites have been secured, the author says that all one requires besides is repose, and gravely recommends the following as an opiate before retiring to bed: 'Take equal parts of brandy and rum, each a large

wine-glassful, half a glass of arrack, and the same quantity of curaçoa. To these add the juice of two small limes, and the rind—peeled thin—of one, with *quant. suff.* of refined sugar to render the whole palatable. Then pour in double the quantity of strong decoction of gunpowder tea, boiling hot, with two glasses of warm calf's-foot jelly. Stir well together, and swallow instantler.' To this he naively adds: 'If it fail of the desired effect, it can only be because either your conscience or your stomach is overloaded.'

Mr Sturgeon then proceeds to argue in favour of an improved system of education, by means of which children should, instead of reading Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, be instructed in those of Mrs Glasse, and proceed through a regular course of 'culinary classics.' He would have geography taught by associating Shrewsbury and Banbury with their cakes, the Isle of Wight with its cracknels, Kent with its cherries, Norfolk with its biffins, and Sussex with its dumplings. In the same spirit he would have travellers give their attention to matters of real utility, and carry culinary rather than astronomical instruments into unexplored regions. Instead of planetary observations, to visit markets instead of libraries, and hold consultations with cooks instead of disputing with academicians.

These are a few of the entertaining morsels which, in the aggregate, make up a savoury dish of satire; and we can well imagine how many a bon-vivant of the last generation laughed at, even while he approved, these precepts on the art of good living.

MUMMY-FLOWERS.

In an interesting article which appeared in a recent number of the *Academy*, Miss Amelia B. Edwards describes some curious additions to the Boolak Museum of Cairo. Several of the royal mummies discovered last year at Deir-el-Bahari were, it will be remembered, found garlanded with flowers, those flowers being for the most part in wonderful preservation. M. Arthur Rhoné, in a recent letter to *Le Temps*, has described the extremely curious way in which these garlands are woven. They consist of the petals and sepals of various flowers, detached from their stems, and inclosed each in a folded leaf of either the Egyptian willow (*Salix salsaf*) or the *Mimaisops Kummel Bruce*. The floral ornaments thus devised were then arranged in rows—the points being all set one way—and connected by means of a thread of date-leaf fibre woven in a kind of chain-stitch. The whole resembles a coarse 'edging' of vegetable lace-work. Among the flowers thus preserved are the bright blue blossoms of the *Delphinium orientale*, or larkspur; the blue lotus, or *Nymphaea caerulea*; the white of *Nymphaea lotus*, with pink-tipped sepals; the blossoms of the *Sesbania Egyptiaca*; and the orange-hued flower of the *Carthamus tinctorius*, or safflower, so largely employed as a dye by the ancient inhabitants of the Nile valley. The dried fruit, as well as the dried yellow blossom, of the *Acacia Nilotica* is likewise present; and mention is also made of the blossom of a species of water-melon now extinct. The foregoing are all interwoven in

the garlands in which the mummy of Amenhotep I. was elaborately swathed. With others of the royal mummies were found fine detached specimens of both kinds of lotus, the blue and the white, with stems, blossoms, and seed-pods complete. Still more interesting is it to learn that upon the mummy of the priest Nebsooli, maternal grandfather of the King Pinotem II. (twenty-first dynasty), there was found a specimen of the lichen known to botanists as the *Parmelia furfuracea*. This plant is indigenous to the islands of the Greek Archipelago, whence it must have been brought to Egypt at or before the period of the Her-Hor Dynasty (1100 or 1200 B.C.). Under the Arabic name of 'Kheba,' it is sold by the native druggists in Cairo to this day.

These frail relics of many a vanished spring have been arranged for the Boolak Museum with exquisite skill by that eminent traveller and botanist Dr Schweinfurth. Classified, mounted, and, so to say, illustrated by modern examples of the same flowers and plants, they fill eleven cases—a collection absolutely unique, and likely ever to remain so. The hues of these old-world flowers are said to be as brilliant as those of their modern prototypes; and, but for the labels which show them to be three thousand years apart, no ordinary observer could distinguish between those which were buried with the Pharaohs and those which were gathered and dried only a few months ago.

THE SONG OF THE HEART.

Blithely sings the young heart, and cheerily shines the sun;
'Tis spring o' the year, 'tis early morn, and life is but begun.
The day is bright, the heart is light,
And all the future years
Stretch forth as fair, with never a care,
Nor clouds, nor tears.

Boldly sings the young heart, but scorchingly shines the sun;
'Tis the summer now, 'tis mid-day heat, the work of life is begun.
But Hope runs high, while the steadfast eye,
Fixed on the goal of Fame,
Heeds not the glare, for he who will dare,
Must win a name.

Cheerily sings the old heart, while slowly sets the sun;
'Tis autumn chill, 'tis eventide, and rest is now begun.
Brave was the heart that did its part,
And ever upheld the right:
Now sets the sun, the work is done;
Now comes the night.

Hushed now is the tired heart, and set now is the sun;
'Tis winter-time, the stars gleam out, the new life is begun.
Calm is the sleep, and long and deep,
But bright will the waking be;
The Cross has been borne, the Crown will be worn
Through all Eternity.

MARY J. MURDIE.

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NORWAY UNDER THE SNOW.

BY A NORWEGIAN.

HAVE you ever been to Norway in the winter?—You have not! Well, do you know what seventy degrees under freezing-point means?—Not exactly! I am glad you qualify the negation. You mean to say you have read in travellers' accounts of Siberian and American colds, of negative degrees of temperature, when horses perish and birds drop dead? I have read of those too, but never experienced them; either it must be that our Norwegian degrees are 'smaller' than others, or else we have in Norway a different 'draught,' as we should say, in the air. However that may be, we have every year such a temperature, and it is then that we Norwegians enjoy ourselves. Let me endeavour to sketch a winter-day in Norway when the thermometer is seventy degrees below freezing-point.

You go to bed overnight warm and comfortable, your last recollection of existence being hot punch, bright eyes, and a roaring logfire in the stove of your bedroom; you dream of summer, of balmy air, of walks in the dusk of a northern summer's evening with the girl you love, of the scent of hay, and the fragrance of mountain herbs, and you are rudely awakened from your ethereal existence by sharp detonating sounds. But if you know the sound, you know also that it is merely the herald of tremendous frost. You hear the old oak staircase crack; you hear a splitting noise in the frame of the window, and your bedpost seems to have got gout in its legs; but sleep on! it is only the 'natural susceptibility' of wood to cold. Day breaks, and you are awakened by an irritating sensation about your moustaches, and you find that these have actually fastened on to the coverlet and are white with frost; but only keep well under the feather-bed of soft down of the eiderfowl from the Lofoden Islands, and you will find you are after all, in spite of external appearances, on excellent terms with yourself.

A rap at the door, and enters, in the fashion of the country, a pretty blue-eyed Norwegian maid, who cheerfully asks how you have slept, and tells you that 'it is the coldest night we have had this winter.' She brings with her a cup of excellent coffee and the necessaries for a morning's ablution, as the tub has no temptation to-day; but what seems, however, to appeal stronger to your imagination, and act on your tenderest feelings of gratitude towards the damsel, is the fagot-wood and logs she carries, which, soon ablaze in the capacious stove, send a thrill of comfort to the core of your heart. You hasten up and look at the thermometer by the window: it stands between sixty and sixty-five degrees below freezing-point; you rub your hands with delight at the idea; it has been seventy degrees in the night. Now it is really cold!

We gather at breakfast in the commodious dining-room of the house, where a blazing logfire sends its cheering influence to the farthest end of the hall, and we admire the fanciful play of the winter sun's rays on the Brazilian flora of the ice-covered windows. We talk and chaff over the breakfast, discuss last night's dance, and lay plans for the enjoyment of the short day of the North. Never did you seem more inclined to see your friends; you hesitate between asking them all to come in the afternoon, or going to a dance at some neighbouring *gaard*, where there is a gathering; and as there are young folks of the company, the latter is decided on.

But let us go outside. You sally forth, dressed 'to the white of your eyes' in furs; and it is with a pleasant sensation of importance that you hear the *knirken*, as we say in Norway, under your heels as you walk on the crisp snow. Everything has a frosty and bright appearance, only the poor sparrow perched on the stack of corn provided for his wants (a Norse custom), chirps sadly; while the wily magpie under the eaves looks like an old philosopher, and tries hard to appear to have not the least knowledge of where the spring chickens, the eggs, and the cherries, and all the other good things have gone

to, which have so mysteriously disappeared from under the eagle eye of the goodwife during the days of summer. But in yonder birch, silvery with the hoar-frost, there is life and merriment! A flock of capercaillie have settled there in the early morn, and while the proud cock swaggers about in peacock-like fashion, boasting of his lovely tail, which glistens in the sun's rays with all the colours of the rainbow, his *inamorata* the hen affects quite an air of unconscious *naïveté* as she winds through the filigree branches, so marvellously illustrative of the disposition of many a representative of the fair sex. You look at the scene, and you love all creation; your gun is forgotten; the picture is too pleasing. Well, perhaps the destructive propensities may be too strong for you; you rush for it, tear the cover off, but in an instant drop it with an exclamation. The barrel is like a red-hot poker thrust between your fingers; the skin of your palm is gone through the contact with iron; and the magpie yonder, who has been watching you from under his wing all the while, suddenly shakes himself into life, and takes his slow departure with a malicious shriek.

Now comes the great event of the day, lunch, or rather dinner; and by the time the coffee and cigars have been consumed, in Norse fashion, with the ladies, the stars are already twinkling from the dark-blue northern sky. We hear the stamping and neighing of the horses as the sleighs are being brought round to the hall-door. You finish your cigar—it is too cold to smoke out of doors—and get into your furcoat, made from the fell of a Norwegian wolf; topboots lined with soft sheepskin; fur gloves; and to crown it all, a bear-skin cap drawn over your ears; and you feel fit for a drive to the North Pole.

You see that the ladies and children in the roomy family sleigh are well wrapped up in bearskin and foot-bags; but your interest is concentrated more on your own 'fare,' the girl from whose eyes you last night in the dance drunk those sweet but painful draughts of uncertain love, who now again trusts herself to your guiding arm, and this time to curb the capricious temper of a Norwegian sleigh-trotter. Carefully you embalm her in the light *spids stæde*, or point-sleigh; you examine the wiry shafts and the harness with great care, stroke the arching neck of the animal with an encouraging word, and take your seat on the perch behind. 'Let him go, Gustaf!' And you are off along the hard trodden road with the speed of an avalanche, whilst the frosty air whistles around you, and makes the blood for a moment tingle in your cheeks, and you feel, through the rapid motion, a delight and internal exuberance of spirits, which is equally shared by the fair companion before you, as you speed through the glistening snow. How you bless the inventor of that vehicle, whose genius has created this pleasant little gondola of the snow for your individual benefit, in which you may be so near the object of your affection, watch every play of her capricious nature in her shadowed eyes, and inhale that sweet perfume so delicious and intoxicating to every

lover. Yes, how many tales of true love have not been told in a Norwegian point-sleigh, and treasured for ever by the fair listener!

And what a scene, what an impressive atom of Nature's creation you gaze on. High above you is the vaulted arch of the deep-blue heavens, the colour of which you will only see near the Polar Circle, and which is closely studded by innumerable silvery stars. There is the merry Polar star right above you, round which the 'Great Bear' walks his nightly beat, followed in solemn procession by the valiant Orion, who lifts his glistening glaive against the frontlet of the defiant Bull; while lo! just above the crowns of the pine-trees in the forest yonder, a brilliant star arises, a visitor from a milder clime, not always seen in the northern sky, the Dog-star, the vigilant Sirius of the Greeks; and across the heavens is cast a broad ribbon shining with myriads of invisible worlds, the Milky-way, along which the valorous Scandinavian *Kjemper*, the gallant warriors of the Saga, rode to Walhalla, the portals of which you see encircled by the curved segment of the aurora-borealis, whose fiery rays erratically flood the heavens with a thousand colours and fantastic shapes of liquid flame. And around you is the scenery of a Norwegian landscape, with its hills and dales bementled in virgin snow, in which the distant mountains recline in bold relief on the dark background, which also invests the solemn pine-trees, under whose snow-laden crowns and boughs we are now sweeping with a mysticism which makes us ponder on the innumerable tales of the goblin and the brownie, in which old Norway abounds.

Speed on, speed on, my fleet *sleijner*, to where the lights are twinkling with a merry welcome from every window! In the spacious hall, adorned with the trophies of the chase, the bear-head and the elk-antlers, we receive a hearty welcome, and the customary draught from the loving-cup, which nobody must refuse. Whilst the ladies arrange their slightly ruffled feathers, we take a stroll through the festive rooms, thronged with a merry crowd. Here is a room reserved for card-players, where the silent demeanour and sombre mien of the company indicate that large stakes are at issue; and another, where you may hear stories of money made and money misspent—of fortunes made in a day by forest-buying and forest-selling, and squandered as quickly; tales of hunting and sport, of loving and wooing, and where the rafters ring with the merriment and laughter of the proud Norwegian peasant, who knows of no aristocracy by blood, no inherited distinction, but who nevertheless can boast of a descent of a thousand years from the kings and jarls of ancient Scandinavia. And let us not forget a peep into the supper-room. The long *sal*, as it is termed in Norwegian, with an immense table draped in snow-white cloth, and covered with ornaments and innumerable dishes and removes, on which the pride of every good housewife is centred, is certainly a sight worth seeing; and here is neither forgotten the *dram og öl*, nor the *smörgåas*, with which the Norseman always opens the dinner campaign.

But let us hasten to the ballroom, where dancing under the fragrant pine-boughs with

the wax-candles entwined, is in full swing, where you will find as finely a turned ankle and as white a shoulder as in any ballroom in Paris or London. There is winter and hard frost without; but the dancing goes on uninter-ruptedly within, and the young blood shoots quicker through the veins by the contrast; and the dancing lasts till day breaks, when the faint rays of the chilly winter sun drive you off to sleep and sweet dreams.

Such is Norway under the snow! A life in the very centre of death, the vigorous Scandi-navian nature is roused to its highest point of vitality through the rigidity of the Arctic winter.

THE INGENIOUS SMUGGLERS.

A TALE OF SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

THE following curious stories, illustrating the clever devices adopted by smugglers nearly a century since to conceal their operations from the officers of the Revenue, were related by a physician, long since deceased, who for many years had carried on an extensive practice on the southern coast of England.

The doctor was quite a young man when he succeeded to his father's practice about the year 1810, and settled in the old family house, situated less than a mile from the sea-coast. His practice included a large island, which from its peculiar position, could only be approached over a long range of dreary and very dangerous sands, pass-able at low-water only, but completely covered at high tides.

At the period above mentioned, smuggling was a regularly recognised business all round the English coasts, but especially those which lay near France. The island in question was then but thinly populated by four or five farmers and their labourers, who were born smugglers to a man. But although the doctor had con-stantly heard of these people, he had seen nothing of them personally, his education having kept him much from home. He soon, however, had an opportunity of making their close acquaint-ance in a manner perhaps more romantic than agreeable.

The doctor having had occasion to visit, pro-fessionally, the wife of one of the farmers, named Sims, who was expecting to add to the 'olive branches' round the family table, was leisurely proceeding late at night to the cottage, near the shore, where he usually left his horse, when, on turning the corner of a wall, he was suddenly seized by four men, one of whom held a lantern to his face, whilst a second presented an enormous horse-pistol at his head.

'A stranger!' exclaimed the lantern-holder. 'A revenue informer!' said a second. 'A pre-ventative spy!' cried a third.

The doctor instantly realising his position, frankly replied: 'You are quite mistaken, gentle-men. I am neither one nor the other. My name is Stavely—Dr Stavely—of Slaperton. I have just been attending Mrs Sims, and I am now—'

'My missus!' exclaimed the fourth man; and catching up the lantern, held it to the doctor's

face. At once recognising him, Sims held out his great broad hand, saying: 'Sure enough, and so it is.—I humbly beg your pardon, doctor. Had we known it was you, we should not have handled you so roughly. But you know, sir, our trade's a risky one, and we have to look out precious sharp sometimes for strangers and informers.' Then adding, after a pause: 'I need hardly ask you, sir, to keep quiet as to what you have seen.'

The doctor readily assured them all that their secret was perfectly safe in his custody; when Sims, instantly producing a large pocket-flask, filled out some brandy in the cup, saying: 'We must wet the bargain, doctor, with a sip all round;' and presented the cup to the doctor.

It contained the finest French brandy, and which, it is to be feared, had never passed His Majesty's Customs, nor had been profaned by the touch of the odious 'pre-ventative' man. The spirit was so potent that the doctor could take but a mere sip. He was not a little amazed, however, to see the large metal cup completely drained by each of the men in turn, as they drank 'Health and long life to the young doctor,' whose frank and open manner had apparently quite won their hearts. All four accompanied him to the cottage, and saw him safely mounted for his lonely ride home over the sands.

Two days after this, the doctor was again one evening in attendance on Mrs Sims, and finding his visit would probably be prolonged, he returned down-stairs and took his seat in the 'keeping-room,' a large and comfortable apartment, but having the front-door of the house opening into it direct, without an intervening hall or passage, an arrangement common enough in old-fashioned farmhouses. Two windows looked out to the front; and the commodious fireplace on one side was flanked by large cushioned elbow-chairs, inviting rest and repose. A door at the inner side of the room opened into a sort of washhouse or scullery, with one very small barred window, but having no door or any sort of outlet opening to the outside.

The doctor seated himself by the fire; and having partaken of a substantial tea, to which was added a flask of French *eau-de-vie*—without which accompaniment, by-the-by, nothing ever seemed to be done in this enlightened region—he took up a copy of *Gulliver's Travels*, and com-posed himself very comfortably in one of the easy-chairs by the hospitable blaze. Whether it was the warmth of the fire or of the *eau-de-vie*, or the influence of the veracious adventures of Mr Lemuel Gulliver, it is impossible to say, but the doctor dropped off to sleep, and slept soundly till between eleven and twelve, when he was aware, without looking up, of the house-door opening and voices whispering together, and then heard Sims say: 'It's all safe; I see it's only the doctor.' Two men then crossed the room, stepping lightly, and apparently carrying heavy burdens each, and disappeared into the scullery at the back, shortly afterwards followed by Sims himself. 'Some smuggling job, of course, and they are going to deposit the tubs in the scullery,' thought the doctor, intending to have a yarn with Sims when he came out.

The doctor having waited a very considerable time, and all being profoundly silent, his surprise

was naturally excited as to what these three men could possibly be about in the little scullery to conduct their proceedings with such extraordinary silence. After another spell of waiting, the doctor's curiosity quite overcame his discretion; he could stand it no longer; he must see for himself; and taking up a candle, he pushed open the door and entered the scullery. It was empty! The doctor's astonishment was unbounded. Not a sign of Sims or his two men! Where had they gone? What on earth had become of them? 'Ah! a secret door, of course, opening into the yard,' and then, with the candle, he made a close and exact scrutiny of the walls. It was a small place, about ten feet square, built against the house. Its three walls were substantial red brick, without the slightest sign or mark indicating any aperture but the small square window, which, as already stated, was crossed by an iron bar; and the roof was ordinary timber and tiles. The place contained nothing at all but a sort of rough table or dresser on one side, two washing-tubs, an old tool-chest, and a few other odds and ends. Each of these underwent the closest scrutiny by the young doctor. He 'opened the chest; but it was empty. The wash-tubs also were empty.

The doctor was perfectly staggered. Utterly perplexed and bewildered, he returned to his chair, closing the door after him, and set himself to think how, and by what piece of ingenuity, this singular feat had been accomplished, when he received a message from the nurse to attend his patient up-stairs. A few minutes afterwards, the front-door was closed, and he heard the sound of footsteps leaving the house, which showed him plainly that as the men went 'somewhere' through the scullery, they could, of course, return from 'somewhere' by the same mysterious route. Anyway it was a curious mystery, and the doctor resolved that he would ferret it out somehow sooner or later.

After he had paid his visit, he again returned to his comfortable chair, and found a well-appointed supper ready laid. In a few minutes the scullery door quietly opened, and, to the great astonishment of the doctor, Sims entered from within, all smiles and *bonhomie*, begging the doctor at once to be seated and partake of supper.

He made anxious inquiries about his wife, to which the doctor was able to return reassuring answers. Some desultory talk followed, after which the doctor, taking advantage of a brief pause, said bluntly: 'Oh, I say, Sims, where did you and your two men get to when you went into the scullery this evening? You all disappeared in some marvellous sort of way; but as there is neither chimney, nor window, nor second door, I can't conceive how you all managed it.'

'Oh, well, sir,' replied Sims, a broad grin on his good-tempered face, 'you saw us all go in, and you saw me come out. The other two came out whilst you were up-stairs. What more would you have?'

'Ay, ay,' said the doctor; 'that's all very well. But where were you all between whiles? Not a soul was in the place, for I looked it all round carefully.' The doctor perceived by his evasive replies that Sims evidently did not wish to tell

the secret; and so, after a little thrusting and parrying on both sides, the doctor wisely gave it up, resolving to bide his time, but being quite determined to find the trick out; for trick there evidently was, and a clever one too.

Supper was barely ended when the doctor was again called up-stairs, and in a short time had the pleasure of announcing to Sims the happy arrival of another 'olive branch'—the eighth—to grace and strengthen the family tree. Nor was he suffered to depart until the auspicious event had been celebrated in sundry bumpers of French brandy.

Two days after this, the doctor was again in attendance on his patient; but before going into the house, he closely and carefully examined the walls of the mysterious scullery outside; but found nothing but plain hard brick, with not the slightest mark or sign of an aperture of any sort; and the iron bar at the window was firm and rigid.

After seeing his patient, he returned to the parlour to lunch. The door of the scullery was wide open, and the sun was shining brightly in. The doctor took another and still more careful survey, this time by broad daylight, but found nothing at all to elucidate the mystery. Everything was exactly as he had left it. 'Unaccountable,' muttered the doctor, 'wholly, entirely unaccountable!'

Having despatched his lunch, the doctor was leaning back in his chair, his thoughts occupied entirely with this veritable 'mysterious chamber,' and his eyes fixed upon the old tool-chest, which was in full view through the open door. In the profound silence which reigned around, the doctor thought he heard a slight noise, apparently proceeding from the chest. A thought suddenly struck him; he stepped lightly from his chair and stood aside, but keeping his eye on the chest. What was his astonishment to see the lid very slowly rising, and presently the broad, good-natured, red face of Sims appear on the edge, gradually followed by the rest of that worthy's portly person! Sims stepped out on to the floor, closed the lid, and turning round, was somewhat disconcerted to see the doctor standing full grin in the doorway.

'So I have unearthed the badger, have I?' said he, extending his hand to Sims, which the other grasped warmly.

'Ay, ay, doctor,' replied Sims; 'I'm done this time, sure-ly. But I know I have nothing to fear from you, sir.'

The doctor assured him that his secret was perfectly safe with him and always would be; when he was agreeably surprised by Sims proposing that, as he had found out part of the secret, he might as well know all, and therefore asked him if he would like to see what he pleasantly called the 'warehouse.' The doctor readily assenting, Sims closed and bolted the scullery door inside; and then raising the lid of the old chest, pressed in what in appearance was simply one of the six screws which secured one of the hinges, by which a catch beneath the bottom of the chest was released. The bottom was then lifted, and below appeared a square trap-door with an iron ring. Pulling this up, a ladder was seen secured upright to the side of the shaft, which the doctor at once perceived had

been originally a well. The doctor was directed to descend, followed by Sims, who carefully closed the lid of the chest, then the false bottom, and lastly the trap-door, securing the last by a bolt. After descending many feet, the doctor found himself on firm ground; and Sims, feeling about, drew from a recess some candles and a tinder-box—there were no lucifers in 1810—and having lighted two of the candles, handed one to the doctor; and taking the other himself, led the way through a low narrow passage about five or six feet long, till it opened into a chamber twelve feet square and about seven or eight feet high. In this chamber were carefully stowed a number of 'tubs' of French brandy; small bales containing French cambrics, laces, silks, and such like; baskets holding so many bottles of pure Schiedam, and a variety of other things of foreign make which would always command a ready sale in the smugglers' market. The place felt dry and warm, ventilation being carried on through a pipe passing upwards to the roof of the house above, and having the appearance outside, of an ordinary rain-water pipe.

'There,' said Sims, 'that's our "warehouse," sir; and that's our present stock, which I expect we shall part with before the week is out.'

'Ay; but how do you manage that? That's just the trick of your trade I can't understand.'

'Oh, nothing easier, when you have all your arrangements made out. Up London-way there's a rich firm in Houndsditch who are always ready to pay cash down—and a good price too, mind you—for any foreign goods sent to them. All we've got to do is to see the goods safely into the hands of their agent at Bradston up yonder [meaning the market-town near]. Well, he counts up the goods and pays us the price down. After that, all further responsibility rests on Tommy Sutton, who—'

'What!' exclaimed the doctor; 'Tommy Sutton, did you say? Not the tax collector, surely?'

Sims nodded, with a broad grin. 'He collects the revenue with one hand, and cleverly cheats them, like winkin', with the other.—Ah!' said Mr Sims, relapsing into a highly moral strain, 'I fear, sir, it's a wicked world!' And turning to a recess in the wall, sought to relieve his troubled mind with the spirituous panacea so popular on all and every occasion in these parts.

The smuggler then, without the slightest hesitation, in reply to the doctor's inquiries, proceeded to relate that, on taking the farm some years before, he had in his employment a wonderfully intelligent and clever fellow about twenty-eight or thirty, who called himself 'John Smith.' He had evidently been well and carefully educated. He wrote a fine hand with great facility, was a good accountant, a fair draughtsman, and an admirable mechanic. He played the violin too, and sang very well. But he never could by any chance be got to speak of his antecedents, where he came from, or where his friends lived. Besides this—what was certainly very singular in those days—he was a 'total abstainer,' and never smoked. He entered with hearty gusto into the smuggling business, evidently appreciating that far more than farm-work; and many a time his quick intelligence and ready wit had succeeded in pull-

ing through a serious scrape, or devised means to carry out some difficult or hazardous job. Sims then went on to relate how Smith had called his attention to a dry well in the yard close behind the house, which was covered over, but not filled up. Smith had carefully examined it, and found it dry, clean, well built, and about twenty feet deep. He immediately proposed—for his intelligence saw a good opportunity—to construct a chamber at the bottom of this well as a secret 'warehouse' for smuggled goods, using the well as a shaft for entry and exit; first, however, suggesting the erection of a supposed scullery against the back of the house, so as to cover the well and conceal their operations. Accordingly, with the help of two trusty friends, the work was at last completed, but only after a vast amount of toil and labour day and night, which was necessarily increased by the difficulty of keeping their proceedings quiet. An upright ladder was fixed against the side of the well, and a square hinged trap-door covered the mouth of the shaft. But it at once became evident to Smith's quick perception that this trap-door, unless effectually and permanently concealed in some way or other, might lead to awkward discoveries. What was to be done? Here Smith's ingenuity again came to the rescue; he proposed to utilise a large old tool-chest that belonged to Sims, and carried out the brilliant idea entirely himself. The bottom was carefully hinged underneath, and shut to with a catch, which was released when pressed upon by a stout wire passing downwards through the side of the chest, and attached at its upper end to what appeared to be merely one of the hinge screws. The whole was so carefully and neatly executed as to defy the closest inspection.

'Well,' said the doctor, when they emerged into daylight, 'I must confess the whole contrivance is most ingenious, and I congratulate you on having so clever an assistant.'

'Ah! but that's just it,' said Sims, ruefully scratching his head. 'Smith's gone, worse luck—gone as mysteriously as he came. One night about two years ago we had had a sharp brush with three pre-ventative men, one of whom suddenly recognised Smith, and called him by the name of Tom Walsh. But in the row and confusion, Tom Walsh *alias* John Smith disappeared, and has never been seen in these parts since. But,' continued Sims, 'I read in the paper some four months back, that a London man, about thirty-five years old, calling himself James Collins, but whose real name was said to be Thomas Walsh, was hanged at York for fraud and forgery, and it was stated at the trial that he was implicated in more than one burglary and murder. Now, whether this was our clever ingenious friend Jack Smith or not, of course I can't pretend to say; but the name and the age agree exactly; and it is clear that there was some mystery about him, which he took precious good care to keep to himself.' Then, after a pause, he added: 'Ah! we missed his ready thought and handy cheerful ways very much. We shan't come across another like him in a hurry, I can tell you. Why, it was he who planned and carried out so cleverly Jemmy Bellamy's "warehouse;" and a smart trick it is too, and one not likely to be discovered.'

'Jemmy Bellamy!' exclaimed the doctor; 'why, does he too carry on the old trade?'

'Does he? Why, we all do,' said Sims with a knowing wink. 'How do you suppose that old Phil Bodgkin managed to retire with thirty thousand pounds? You don't suppose all that was made out of farming, do you, though some fools pretend to believe it?'

'By-the-by, Jemmy Bellamy's a patient of mine just now for injured shoulder, which he got going to market last week; and so I'—

'Going to market, ho, ho, ho! Landing some tubs, you mean, which he was doing, one pitch-dark night, when he got that fall on the beach,' grinned Sims. 'When he goes to Bradston market, Tommy Sutton's his best customer.'

'Ah!' said the doctor, 'I see; that's the game, is it? Well, I'll certainly ask him to let me see his warehouse, as you have yours, the very next opportunity.'

Two days after this, the doctor was again at Sims' farm, where he found a pressing invitation from Jemmy Bellamy to go at once to his house, in the centre of the island. Now, this Bellamy—or 'Big Jemmy,' as he was always called—was quite a character in his way. He was of enormous bulk and stature, standing quite six feet six inches, and remarkable for his kindness of heart and unruffled good temper, which nothing ever seemed to put out—no, not even the inconvenient and irregular curiosity of the 'pre-wentative man.' He possessed an immense visage, in which the colours of the setting-sun predominated; and his stupendous nose, shaded rich purple, stood out with artistic boldness from the blooming, highly-coloured field surrounding it. But his great point was his extraordinary capacity for imbibing all and any kind of strong drink, which was so utterly marvellous, that it was with difficulty the doctor—when professionally examining him—could be made to comprehend it. French brandy, or Dutch Schiedam, the commonest English gin, or the worst British rum, or whisky from Ireland or Scotland, were all the same to Jemmy; in the most incredible quantities they all went down his capacious maw like water, and produced almost as little effect; whilst as to common beer, he consumed it by the gallon.

The doctor was warmly welcomed by 'Big Jemmy'; and after his shoulder had been duly examined, he offered at once to show the doctor his 'warehouse,' as he understood he wished to see it. Accordingly, he led the way to the stable, and going to the stall farthest from the door, laid hold of what appeared to be a common ring-bolt for securing horses; and unscrewing this, the manger and the upright board beneath it were released, and swung outwards on hinges like a door, and disclosed a second door inside. On opening this, a flight of steps were seen just beyond; and these led straight down into a chamber about twelve feet square and seven or eight feet high; ventilation being cleverly contrived, as in the other case, by a pipe leading up the side of an outhouse above, to which it apparently belonged. The 'warehouse' was now empty, as its late contents had been recently cleared.

'All this was Smith's work too, I believe?' asked the doctor.

'Yes,' replied Jemmy; 'entirely. He proposed it first, then planned it, and carried it out afterwards, doing all the mechanical and carpenter's work with his own hands. Ah! he was a clever chap, he was; too clever by half to live! You've heard, I suppose, of the manner of his death at York?' The doctor nodded; and Jemmy continued: 'It was a sad end, anyhow, for so clever and pleasant a young fellow to come to. All along of bad company, I greatly fear,' added Mr James Bellamy, in a highly moral and deprecatory tone.

As the doctor was evidently greatly interested in these very original 'warehouses,' Bellamy proposed to take him to another farm nearer the coast, belonging to a man named Straker, who had another 'mysterious chamber,' very cleverly contrived. The doctor and his colossal friend were most kindly welcomed by Straker, who readily consented to admit the doctor to his secret. Adjoining the stable was a long narrow harness-room, built up against a rough bank about sixteen or eighteen feet high. The farther end of this room was lined with deals, and running across it was a row of stout wooden pegs, whereon bridles, hats, coats, &c. were hung. Bolting the door—a wise precaution—Straker unscrewed the last peg, below which appeared a brass stud or button. Pressing this—just as in the other cases—a catch was released, and the deal lining moved on a hinge like a door, disclosing a second one behind it, which led direct into a small chamber cut in the bank at the rear, filled nearly to the roof with goods all ready for removal to the smugglers' market in the usual way.

On re-entering the stable, Straker showed the doctor two or three trusses of hay, and informed him that the interior of each had been removed and replaced by tin cases filled with cambric, laces, and such-like articles, which could be closely packed away. The doctor was also shown several pumpkins and large vegetable marrows which were carefully cultivated for the express purpose of being hollowed out, and receiving tin cases for the transport of smaller articles which could be stowed away inside; and even turnips were often employed in the same curious way; for such very ordinary commodities as these would, of course, easily pass unsuspected in a common market-cart going to market on the usual Saturdays.

The doctor was a universal favourite wherever he went, and he soon became involuntarily the confidant of all the smugglers round about; but, to his honour be it recorded, he never divulged a single secret that had been confided to him; nor was he ever heard even to allude to the question of smuggling during his residence and practice; and it was not till nearly forty years afterwards, when he had retired from the profession and was residing in London, and when all those connected with the 'warehouses' were either dead or had left the neighbourhood, that he related the cases forming the subject of this paper. Many and curious were the smuggling anecdotes the doctor was in the habit of relating in his latter years, and of the wonderful ingenuity displayed in constructing these secret 'warehouses' on the island, as those we have here referred to were by no means the only ones.

Some, indeed, are said to remain unto this day; but as the entrances have been built up, their existence is wholly unknown to the present occupants of the adjoining houses.

SIX WEEKS IN SICILY.

Now that war and its consequences have for the present rendered Egypt undesirable as a wintering-ground for those in search of health, or the larger and ever-increasing luxurious class who seek to avoid the cold and bad weather we experience for so many months in the year, there must be many invalids and friends of invalids casting about in their minds with anxious solicitude the query: 'Where shall we go?' If a few weeks of our pleasant experience in the spring of 1881 encourage any to try Sicily, we believe they will not regret following our steps.

Anything more beautiful it is impossible to imagine than the entrance to the lovely Bay of Palermo, guarded on one side by the massive Monte Pellegrino, and on the other by Monte Navarino; while the city, bathed in perpetual sunshine, and laved by the calm waters of the Mediterranean, lies at the mouth of the rich and fertile plain, the Conca d'Oro (Shell of Gold); so named, we conclude, from the golden fruit which bulks so largely in the exports of Palermo, whose plain is simply a thicket of many square miles of orange and lemon gardens, stretching up to an encircling amphitheatre of hills, some of which tower to the height of five thousand feet—altogether completing a picture from which any artist might well have drawn as a subject for The Plains of Heaven. For invalids, Palermo is rapidly becoming a favourite winter resort, the temperature between night and day being subject to less variation there than in almost any other known place.

The city itself is beautifully clean. The hotels are comfortable and well managed, if a little expensive—from twelve to twenty francs per day according to rooms chosen, or rather, we should say, according to arrangements made before allowing your luggage to be removed from the cab. A note here may not be amiss to travellers—namely, that we always found ourselves in a more independent and better position for making a bargain when in a carriage or cab, instead of the hotel omnibus, which meets you at the station, where, once entered, you are apt to be considered bagged game. The best hotels scout the word *pension*; but all are amenable to *un arrangement*, especially in the case of a family, as we were—or to a stay of some days or weeks. Every one who knows what travelling in Italy means, still more in Sicily, knows how necessary this is, if you wish to avoid the unpleasant companionship of a fretted spirit, a heavy heart, and a light purse.

The Ragusa family hold both the *Trinacria* and the *Hôtel de Palmes*. We, however, were recommended to the *Hôtel de France*, and were very comfortable, and illness supervening to one of our party, were most kindly and liberally dealt with by the manager or *directeur*.

The fertility of the land and its value in the neighbourhood of Palermo, may best be realised when one learns that an acre of lemon-trees in

favourable seasons yields a return of about seventy pounds sterling; nevertheless, oranges are freely bought at a penny a dozen—oranges which have had the misfortune of spoiling all our subsequent enjoyment of imported fruit.

The vegetation is altogether striking, the Botanical Gardens furnishing an avenue of date and other palms, with fine specimens of bamboo, cane, and other Eastern and Southern trees; while beautiful ornamental fountains and tanks foster an abundant bloom of lilies of the Nile, and a profusion of tresses of maidenhair and other delicate ferns. Some of the creeping plants are lovely beyond description. The exquisite *Bougainvillea*, with their brilliant blossom-like foliage, were literally masses of bloom and colour. Imagine, if you can, three or four feet in depth of solid bloom, of the richest softest mauve, or the brightest shade of coral, festooning an arch or balcony to the height of twenty or thirty feet! Our visit was in March and April.

The private gardens of some of the more wealthy inhabitants are thrown open to strangers and visitors; and a great pleasure we had in visiting the grounds of the beautiful Belmonte, which climb the Pellegrino, where every now and then a rocky seat invites you to rest on your way to the little temple higher on the hill. Here the best view is to be obtained of the magnificent prospect at your feet; or you can gaze and wonder at the magnificent specimens of aloes and prickly-pear which in some places dot, in others clothe the rocky banks around you, every crevice of the rock being filled with the bright pink star of the *Saponaria Calabrica*, which also creeps down into the meadows beneath, shedding a rosy glowing haze on the feeding-ground of a flock of wild scrambling picturesque goats. What at home would have been carefully nurtured, petted, and coaxed as individual plants, are here treated as denizens of the shrubbery. Geraniums formed a hedge of four feet in width, and of equal height. It was very evident that a good understanding exists between Nature and the gardener, he not interfering with, but only humouring her in her sweet wilful ways.

Before quitting the subject of vegetation, we must not forget to speak of the truly picturesque olive-trees which line some of the roads in the outskirts of Palermo. We had been almost ashamed to acknowledge to ourselves a feeling of disappointment on our first introduction to this classic tree. The silver-lined foliage, thin, and wanting in mass and impressiveness—what ever great authorities like Mr Ruskin may say—did not come up to our expectations and ideas. Some of these aged olives are veterans that can trace back their infancy to the times of the Saracens, some eleven hundred years ago, and seem to be gifted with an almost supernatural vitality. Their stems, gnarled and knotted, were bereft of everything but the bark, and this in many cases, while frayed and fretted into an open interwoven lacework, yet served as the channel for conveying life and sap to a crown of young fresh fruit-bearing branches.

To an artist's eye, the Eastern character of much of the architecture cannot fail to be deeply interesting. Even so late as the time of the Normans, it was customary to employ Arabian architects and artists for the building and decora-

tion of their sacred edifices. The barbaric gorgeousness of the rich mosaics of the cathedral, and still more so of the church attached to the ancient royal palace, is very striking, where massive silver lamps—weighing two or three hundredweight—suspended from the storied ceiling, rich in Bible scenes, throw the dim religious light upon walls dazzling with gold mosaic—the whole interior is of this gold ground—and brilliant with pictures of sacred story. When these mosaics are on a large scale, and viewed at a correct distance, it is marvellous how capable they are of producing pictures of both force and beauty; as witness the head of our Saviour in the tribune of the latter-named church.

The many changes of race and nation that have dominated in Sicily, have stamped its people with strange and striking variety. Handsome Moorish faces—living Murillos meeting you at every corner, specially handsome in the case of young boys and children—abounding side by side with the softer Norman type of blue eyes and blond hair; while now and then the straight nose and eyebrow of the Greek tell of the strong hold each race has maintained. We should, however, be disposed to think the Eastern element the most indelible.

We were struck by the numbers of well-dressed young men lounging about in street and caffè with a lamentably idle listless air; but an ingenuous youth threw light upon the subject by reminding us that Palermo is the seat of a university!

The Oriental love of show is strongly marked by the numbers of elegant equipages that grace the fashionable drive between the town and La Favorita, a royal Bourbon palace at the base of Monte Pellegrino, and built in the rather unclassical form of a Chinese pagoda. Unlike the solid ideas of the proverbial Scot, who no sooner gets his head above water than he makes for land, the first ambition of a Palermian on feeling himself begin to float, is to sport a carriage; his second, to own a box at the theatre; his third, to have a dinner other than herbs—that is, salad and macaroni; and his fourth, to own a private and *particulier* burying-ground.

A drive to the Cathedral and Monastery of Monreale, an early rich ecclesiastical settlement about five or six miles from Palermo, planted high on the crest of a hill, makes a charming excursion. The marble cloisters, containing above two hundred exquisitely formed small marble pillars, each one differing from another, but forming a complete whole of matchless beauty, though now, alas! stripped of its mosaic coating, testify to the wealth of these early supporters of Christianity.

Another interesting excursion, though of a different sort of interest, was to Piano dei Greci, an early Albanian colony, whose inhabitants as a body are understood to hold rather loose and heretical views on the binding nature of some of the commandments—the tenth and eighth in particular. The little town stands at the height of above two thousand feet from the level of the ocean, in a sea of hills, or rather mountains; the access to it being by a long winding, yet beautifully constructed road, the increasing altitude of which afforded scope for sudden and unlooked-for gusts of cold sweeping winds, almost as merci-

less and cutting as the Edinburgh east winds, so graphically immortalised by Sydney Smith, and so painfully felt by many a more tender pair of lungs since the days of the witty divine.

The cold was so intense, that the weaker but more numerous section of our party threatened to strike work, and incite the driver to turn his horses' heads back to the sunny plains of Palermo. The mutiny was, however, quelled by the *chef de voyage*, and on and on we went, till at last we found ourselves in the rough steep street of the little ancient town.

It was evident they were not much in the habit of receiving visitors from the outside world, as on our turning in to a little caffè for some refreshment, we were presently followed, and the doors and windows besieged, by a crowd of forty or fifty men, who gradually filled the place, taking up their position at every available point of view, back-benches, back-doors, and back-stairs, and whose coal-black eyes peered at us—with a somewhat alarming and insatiable look of wild curiosity—from out of high-peaked Mephistopheles-like hoods, surmounting the short wide brown cloak of the district. On our way back, we were much struck, in the loneliest part of the wild hill-road, by coming upon a shrine of the Virgin cut and incased in the rock, and lighted for the night by the pious thieves of Piano dei Greci.

When about half-way on our journey, we confess to have experienced a certain amount of trepidation at the wild-looking figures, sometimes one, sometimes two, and sometimes three or four, fierce, reckless-looking men, mounted on horses or mules, with long blue cloaks, high peaked hats with a jaunty feather, their belts invariably displaying a brace of pistols. These men seemed the very impersonation of our ideas of a real brigand; and our fears were not soothed, but on the contrary somewhat heightened, by the convenient-looking caves recurring ever and again in the lime-stone rock. The numerous *carabinieri*, however, stationed at very frequent intervals were reassuring, especially as we saw them taking note of our number, &c.

Some of the villages through which we passed gave us a peep into far-back Italian, or rather Sicilian rural life. It seemed to be universal washing-day—a wholesome if unpleasant day; and as nothing reveals more of the habits as well as the resources of the poor than a family wash—that is, when rich enough to indulge in that luxury—we were much interested in the display of linen hanging from bamboo canes—or, to speak more correctly, from the dried stalks of the Indian corn, which grows freely here—stretched in a neighbourly fashion from window to window across the narrow rocky street of eight or ten feet in width, whose sole attempt at paving had been accomplished by the roll of winter-torrents. The display was on the whole very creditable, if we except the large number of brilliant red and yellow wadded counterpanes, handsome in themselves, but so large that we fear they told tales of serving as a wholesale family covering.

Concerning the fashion of sepulture, we were very much interested, first, by a visit to the Capuchin Monastery, where, in a long, low-

vaulted crypt, the deceased monks to the number of many hundreds are in a (half)-preserved state ranged in a standing position along the walls, dressed in their black robe, with a rope as girdle. It was a ghastly spectacle.

But if the uncoffined monks were a weird sight, a thousand times more so were the ranges of the dead fashionables of Palermo, who, laid in glazed coffins tier upon tier till nearly reaching the roof, were, with their gay unseemly dresses, fully exposed to view; and a strange parody on Dress and Death it was to see young girls arrayed in mocking silk and tarlatan of the gayest hues, with gilt or silvered coronets crowning the glossy skull, the bony fingers filled with faded tinsel flowers. A photograph taken in life and health was generally attached to each coffin, giving name and age, and date of death.

It is customary for the friends of the deceased to visit the place on All-Saints' Day, and in some cases even to renew the dress of the skeletons. We were glad, however, to hear that the municipal government had passed a resolution that no further interments should be permitted in this manner, which is alike unseemly and unhealthy, as a sharp diphtheritic attack, supervening next day to one of our party, proved. A loss it will be to 'the church,' who claimed large sums for the privilege of laying the dead in this holy place—the numbers amounting to many thousand bodies.

We could not help contrasting this Tomb of Fashion with the beauty and quiet of the exquisitely situated new burying-ground lying at the foot of Monte Pellegrino, close to the shore, where the Mediterranean waves beat a lulling cadence, and where the sleepers are laid, faces eastward, as if waiting, almost watching to catch the first streak of the great Easter dawn.

THE OLD CURLER AND HIS WIFE.

It may be safely said that no outdoor game possesses greater attraction for its votaries or is more keenly enjoyed than Curling. It may be that this is partly owing to the uncertainty of ice lasting long enough to satiate the eagerness of the players of the Roaring Game;* or it may be in as great a measure due to the exhilarating nature of a pastime that unites all classes of people in a bond of fraternity for the time-being.

Played on a sheet of ice with large round stones, which are hurled or slid from one end of the rink to the other, the game demands much skill on the part of those who strive to become proficient; and especially of those who, like our 'Old Curler,' endeavour to carry off the much-coveted rink medal. In many places the stones are kept in a small house by the side of the pond or loch, so as to be handy when required. Some curling-stones weigh as much as forty pounds and upwards. Each curler is provided with a besom or broom (cove) for brushing and smoothing away snow and other obstacles to the progress of the stones. Crampits, or spiked shoes for gripping the ice, are now rarely used.

* Under this title, in No. 942, will be found explanations of many of the terms used in curling, and some hints as to playing the game.

The enthusiasm of curlers frequently increases with age, and sometimes induces them to go to the ice when discretion, or the pleadings of anxious friends, would warn them to remain at home. The wilfulness of an old Scottish curler of humble rank, as set against the solicitude of his 'guidwife,' is in a measure depicted in the following lines, which, with all the compliments of the season, and wishing our curling friends many a hearty game, we respectfully offer to our readers.

'Twas winter's deepest heart. The invading frost
Had breathed his chilliest breath o'er rippling
lakes,
And changed their laughing looks to glassy stare,
Their dimpling faces into mirrors bright
And keen, o'er which did glide, like phantom
forms,
The graceful skaters on their polished stool.

The morning sun low glinting in the lift
Had touched the hills with faint and struggling
beam,
Then mounting with red glare, was chasing swift
The hoary mists from all the hollows deep,
And smiting with his rays each rime-clad spray.
The trees stood clothed in splendour, scarce
surpassed
By summer's green; while every glistening prism,
On drooping grass-blade, shone like pearl of sea,
Or gem of Indian mine.

In eot retired,
Debate was keenly held, of moment great
To those concerned; whercof the tenor runs.

Quoth the guidman to the guidwife:
'This is the Medal day;
Tho' cauld's the wind, the ice is keen,
So I'll gang to the play.'

Quoth the guidwife, wi' coaxin' word:
'You winna gang a fit, man.
If you are wise, take my advice,
And by the inglo sit, man.' (fireside)

'I've played before in canlder days,
When glass stood down at zero;
Gi'e me my crampits and my broom—
I'll play like an auld hero.'

'But ye maun mind that was langsyne,
When you were young and yauld, man; (strong)
But now you're stiff, your blude is thin—
And ye have turned auld, man.'

'With frost like this, and ice so keen,
Tho' auld, I yet feel young;
Sae bring my bonnet and my plaid,
Guidwife, and haud your tongue.'

'All night you graned wi' rheumaticks, (groaned)
And sair, sair, did you wheeze, man;
The cauld would nip your marrow-banes;
Your very blude would freeze, man.'

'You've ruled me lang enough, guidwife;
Henpecked nae mair I'll be;
I'll hae my will—my broom and cramps,
And to the loch I'll gae.'

'What! to the ice, in sic a day?
If you daur cross the floor, man,
I'll hide the cramps, I'll burn the cove, (broom)
And double-bar the door, man.'

At hams sits the auld man, baith dumpy and dounce,
As the guidwife, contented now, redd's up the
house.

But the cow she maun milk, and the hens she
maun feed,
As the guidman reminds her, and bids her make
speed.

Forth she goes; when the sly loon jumps up in a
trice,

And with bonnet and plaid, slips away to the ice,
Where wi' laughin' and daffin', wi' mirth and wi'
glee,

He's welcomed by all, as they stand round the tee.

No sides are formed, for each to-day
Must single-handed join the play,
And on his judgment good rely:
The test is skill of hand and eye.

Each curler looked with keen-set eye,
And played with steady hand;
But surest aye the old man aimed,
The deftest of the band.

He played the draw, he played the guard,
The outwick and the in,
He struck, he raised, he chapp'd and chipp'd,
He wick'd and curled in.*

His points ran up; he far outstripped
The curlers young and auld;
He won the Medal—then trudged hame
Through driftin' snaw and cauld.

For oft, as happens in our northern clime,
Bright morning's promise glowed till mid-day's
prime,

Then shaded o'er with banks of threatning cloud,
While gusty swirls of wind blew keen and loud,
And blacker gloomed the thickly gathering storm,
As nature frowned and darkened. In like form
The wifely heart. In part, with petulance,
But more with deep anxiety, her glance
Went out along the dark and drifting path,
Till his return, when out she broke in wrath:

'You doited, donner't, daft auld carle,
In you I've nae mair faith;
Fling bye your plaid—tak' aff your shoon;
This day will be your death.
You now may grane—you now may cough
Like ony croupit wean; (child)
Nae mair blame me, nor this auld house,
But blame the curling stane.'

'Atweel, guidwife, I played yo a plisk (trick)
When I set aff the day;
But the sun was shinin' clear i' the lift,
An' keen was I to play.
I winna say but what ye're richt,
And that I'm sair to blame;
But see, guidwife—hand out your hand—
I've brocht the Medal hame!'

Ah, well the patient husband knew her ways,
And all the goodness of her heart; and so
With gentle word and kindly look, he soothed
The ruffled feelings of the passing hour;
He marked with joy the flash of happiness
That glowed in her at mention of success.
Tho' for a time she sought to mask her pride
With grumbling words and feigned discontent,
Yet up at length the feelings of her heart

* In curling phraseology, these are 'points,' on the comparatively successful achievement of which the prize depends.

Must well, and so they issued forth in words
Revealing all the wifely warmth that burned
A sacred flame, to cherish, light, and cheer
The old man's days. All frown had passed away
From off her brows, when thus she smiling spoke:

'Be blessings on your steady hand,
And on your auld gray pow, man;
And blessings on the curling stanes,
And on your guid broom-cowe, man.
I'm proud you have the Medal won
Upon the loch this day, man;
Sae far awa', frae 'tween us twa,
Let strife for ever stay, man.'

The truce was ratified; with calm content,
Beside the lightsome hearth, they fondly talked.
With kindling face and glowing eye, he played
His games anew, while she her knitting plied.
With joyous heart, to him she listened as
He counted o'er his hard-won victories.
They talked of days of yore; re-lived again
That gladsome hour, when she, with maiden eye,
First watched him play, and her inspiring look
New-nerved his youthful hand and fired his heart
With flame of kindling love. They talked of days
Gone by, when round the hearth the children played
Their mimic games with mimic curling stones;
Or toddling ran, to carry daddy's broom;
But now, all men and maidens grown, their hearts
Went with them, as they fought the sterner strife
Of life's great battles in their varied spheres,
Yet ever and anon came back to cheer
The dear old cot they fondly called their home,
And hear again their father's curling feats.
But as the night grew wilder, with strong gusts
And roar, that told of death and suffering;
A wider sweep their kindly feelings took;
Their hearts of pity turned to those on sea,
Or lonely moor, o'ertaken by the storm;
Then with calm faith commended all to Him
Who cares for all—and slept the sleep of peace.

BOOK GOSSIP.

AMONG the dark things to be associated with the year 1882 is the death of Dr John Brown. Who does not know *Rab and his Friends*? And who, if the author of *Rab* was not known to him or her, does not wish to have known him? Gentle, kind, sympathetic, humorous—not with the humour of flippancy, but of good sense and wise insight—beloved of children, and with the inspiration of child-nature deep in his own heart, Dr Brown was one whom it was an education to know, and is almost an act of piety to remember. It is therefore with an interest that has as much of pathos as of pleasure in it, that we now receive another booklet of his papers, hitherto unpublished in this country. It is a slight thing of two dozen pages, entitled *Something about a Well, with more of Our Dogs* (Edinburgh: David Douglas), but it has within it not a little which shows the genial author at his best.

The opening paper, on the little well among the hills, is marked by the beauties of style which characterised almost everything that came from Dr Brown's pen; and his fine eye for natural effects—the eye of a painter transfused with that of a poet—is here delightfully exemplified. Again, in the papers that follow on 'Our Dogs,' his sketch of Peter, his account of the death of that old favourite Dick, and the life and adventures

of a terrible fellow called Bob, are exquisitely drawn—truthful and, to use a favourite phrase of his own, 'to the quick.' Here is one of his dog-anecdotes (we cannot think of tampering further with what the reader must read for himself): 'I have a notion that dogs have humour, and are perceptive of a joke. In the North, a shepherd having sold his sheep at a market, was asked by the buyer to lend him his dog to take them home. "By a' manner o' means tak Birkie, and when ye're dune wi' him just play so"—making a movement with his arm—"and he'll be hame in a jiffy." Birkie was so clever and useful and gay that the borrower coveted him; and on getting to his farm shut him up, intending to keep him. Birkie escaped during the night, and took the entire hirsel (flock) back to his own master!'

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One of the most beautiful gift-books of the season is a volume from the pen of Dr Andrew Wilson, entitled *Wild Animals and Birds: Their Haunts and Habits* (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin, & Co.). It is written in the free and graceful style which characterises all Dr Wilson's productions, though the subject is dealt with rather from the point of view of the artist, than from that of the naturalist. The anecdotes given of gorillas, lions, tigers, and other of the more formidable mammals, are mingled with stories of the less ferocious *ferce nature*—foxes, polecats, and the like, down to the comparatively innocent hares and rabbits. Birds are similarly treated, the subjects ranging from the eagle to the wood-pigeon.

The book is splendidly embellished, the woodcuts being among the finest which the art of the graver can produce. The various animals introduced into the pictures (drawn by Wolf and others) are represented as if among their natural surroundings, from the jaguar crouching amid the luxuriant tangle and underwood of a tropical forest, to the eagle that nurses its callow brood high up on the dizzy crag, alone with the winds and the stars. Between its pleasing gossip of wild animals and bird-life, and the beauty and suggestiveness of its pictorial illustrations, the book cannot possibly fail of being a success.

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Scotland has been from time to time well supplied with gazetteers. The first book of this description was projected more than half a century since by Dr William Chambers, who, assisted by his brother Robert, produced in 1832 *The Gazetteer of Scotland*, a thick octavo volume of upwards of one thousand pages. The book was full of original matter, most of which had been gleaned by the elder of the two brothers laboriously tramping the country in search of the requisite information. Books of a similar nature had also been published by the two literary brothers previous to this time—*The Book of Scotland*, by William Chambers, and *The Picture of Scotland*, by Robert Chambers.

To the works on Scottish topography thus originated, others on the same lines have succeeded; one of the latest in this class being *The Gazetteer of Scotland*, by the Rev. John M. Wilson (Edinburgh: W. & A. K. Johnston).

Those who have occasion frequently to consult books of reference upon matters of technical or geographical detail, are aware how satisfactory it is to find a book which gives you what you want in few words, and without necessitating your wading through pages of generalities till you discover what you are in search of. Mr Wilson's *Gazetteer*, though confined within the boards of one conveniently sized octavo volume, is yet extensive enough to embrace every town and village of any importance in Scotland, briefly described, and its topographical position defined. In a book such as this, it is impossible to escape errors of a certain kind; but these are not such in this case as to render the book an unsafe guide. The figures of the population are taken from the recent census returns; and the usual information contained in this class of book, such as that referring to public works, public buildings, churches, schools, is briefly and concisely given. The natural features and historical associations of the several localities also receive passing allusion.

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A very valuable series of historical handbooks is presently being issued by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, called the *Early Britain* series. The distinctive qualities of this series apparently are, that the volumes should not be bulky, that each should embrace one aspect of the general subject, and that that aspect should be placed before the reader by a scholar of special and comprehensive knowledge in the particular branch of history under consideration. Of this series, two volumes have been issued. The first is entitled *Anglo-Saxon Britain*, by Grant Allen, B.A., and gives a brief sketch of Britain under the early English conquerors, rather from the social than from the political point of view. 'The principal object throughout,' says the author, 'has been to estimate the importance of those elements in modern British life which are chiefly due to purely English or Low-Dutch influences.' Mr Allen writes in a forcible style, and has a good eye for picturesque effects; hence a matter of dry history which might seem to some readers unattractive, and even repellent, becomes pleasant to peruse and of easy comprehension.

The other volume that has been issued of this series is *Celtic Britain*, by Professor Rhys. It has not quite the same charm of style as renders Mr Allen's work attractive; but on the other hand it more than makes this up to the historical student by the amount of fresh and interesting information which the author has been able to offer in connection with the very dark and difficult subject of Celtic origins. One interesting item has reference to the coins in use among the early Britons. It has generally been assumed, on the authority of Julius Caesar, that no money was current in Britain in his time, but only bronze or pieces of iron of a fixed weight to supply its place. The passage in Caesar's work in which this is stated is, however, according to Professor Rhys, hopelessly corrupt, and the manuscripts differ greatly, some of them ascribing to the Britons the use of coins of gold, and some of bronze. British coins have, however, been found, and,

according to the greatest authority on the subject, the inhabitants of the south of Britain must have begun to coin gold pieces from a hundred to a hundred and fifty years before the time of Julius Cesar's invasion. This of itself is an interesting point to determine in the progress of civilisation among the early Britons.

CHRISTMAS ART PRODUCTIONS.

We have received from Messrs S. Hildesheimer & Co., fine art publishers, London, a box of Christmas and New Year Cards in rare and beautiful designs. These designs are the result of a prize competition originated by the above firm of publishers, and in connection with which prizes were awarded to the amount of two thousand pounds. It is interesting to note that the highest prizes—ranging from the first (a hundred and fifty pounds) to the fifth (twenty-five pounds)—were all won by ladies, showing that the successful cultivation of art for such designs as those referred to is well within the range of *useful* female accomplishments. The designs have been exquisitely copied by the chromo-lithograph process, and many of the Cards are deserving of permanent preservation.

THE MONTH.

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE account which Mr Colquhoun lately read before the Royal Geographical Society of his explorations in the South China Borderlands was full of interest, chiefly because there have been previously only three European expeditions which covered the same ground. We no longer wonder at this, when we hear what an antipathy the natives show towards foreigners. In the provinces of Kwang-tung and Kwang-si there were marked signs of this animosity, for the people mobbed the travellers and hooted at them with cries of *Fanqui-to* (Foreign devil). But the feelings of the people towards strangers can best be estimated from the fact that no missionaries of any sect whatever have yet dared to settle in this part of the country, although some have done so in the provinces to the north.

One most interesting portion of Mr Colquhoun's paper dealt with the Opium question, about which we have heard so much within recent years. He declares that the use of the drug has a most injurious effect upon the Chinese, but that the aborigines drink a rice spirit, and do not touch opium. He does not see how the opium consumption can be stopped; for although the government issue edicts against its cultivation and exportation, the poppy is often to be seen growing under the shadow of official courts, and it is not uncommon to see mandarins lying in their sedan-chairs in a state of stupor from the drug. Mr Colquhoun believes that if the exportation of opium from our Indian possessions were to cease immediately, its consumption in China would not be permanently checked, for a larger area of country would be devoted to its cultivation.

The Council of the Geographical Society have completed all arrangements for the forthcoming expedition to Africa; and Mr Thomson, after staying some months at Zanzibar, getting ready

his goods and staff, will probably start on his dangerous mission in the early spring. The expedition is purely geographical, and its direction is towards the east and north-east of Lake Victoria Nyanza. But it is more than probable that a skilled naturalist will accompany it. Mr Thomson's task is no easy one, a great portion of the country to be traversed being of the most desolate description, where no provisions can be had, and where even water is scarce. Added to these discomforts is the fear of bands of roving Masai, whose lawless doings have scattered peaceably disposed tribes, and stopped cultivation. The expenses of the expedition are estimated at two thousand pounds, which will be defrayed by the Geographical Society.

Mr Muybridge's famous photographs of animals in motion seem to have given a great impetus to the contrivance of simple apparatus for exhibiting such pictures in series, so that they can be brought quickly before the sight one after the other, giving the impression of actual movement. The French popular scientific paper *La Nature* gives a description of one of these little machines, which can be used by the help of an ordinary lamp-light. It has two lenses, the duty of one being to throw the image of a background—magic-lantern fashion—on to a screen; whilst the other lens is devoted to the photographs of the moving figure. In this way a very natural result can be brought about. The apparatus referred to is by M. Reynaud, and he calls it the *Praxinoscope*, a name, by-the-by, borrowed from a contrivance of a somewhat similar character introduced in this country many years ago.

At the recent Photographic Exhibition in London, there was exhibited a new form of lamp for taking portraits at night. Everybody knows what a wonderful light can be obtained by burning a few inches of magnesium wire. In this lamp the same medium is employed, but instead of being consumed in the ordinary way, it is burnt in an atmosphere of pure oxygen. The light given is sufficiently intense to allow of a picture being taken in a fraction of a second.

Mr Fletcher of Warrington—whose gas-stoves and other labour-savers have been already noticed in these pages—records that the various Electric Light Companies are exceedingly good customers for gas. Most of these Companies have been supplied by him with gas apparatus, and some to a very large extent. The gas Companies have certainly not taken advantage of the more brilliant light dealt in by their rivals. But an exception must be named in the Amsterdam Gas Company, whose various offices, engine-room, &c., are lighted by incandescent electric globes, the motive-power for driving the dynamo-machine for feeding them being furnished by a gas-engine. Whether the Company intends this installation as a trial of the strength of its rival, or whether the supply of the electric light is going to be undertaken conjointly with gas, we do not know; but in either case our Dutch friends have exhibited an intelligent interest for the welfare of their shareholders.

Those who have never looked through a telescope, and have merely heard of sun-spots as mysterious visitants which seem to have a curious

influence on harvests, vintages, climatic conditions generally, and even upon commercial panics, have had an opportunity of seeing a remarkably large one with their unaided vision. During a recent fog in the Metropolis, this huge spot could be plainly seen on the red disk whose rays tried to pierce the mist, and was so prominent that it could not escape the notice of the most casual observer. Mr F. Brodie, F.R.A.S., describes this spot as seen through a powerful telescope. He says that it is not only unusually large, but is making very rapid transformations of shape, which are of exceeding interest.

It has been the fond dream of many a musician that if he could only dot down, or get somebody else to dot down for him, the outpourings of his genius as he lays his hands upon the keys and breaks forth into melody, he would be on the road to fame and fortune. The literary man has his scribe, and even the busy solicitor or merchant has his shorthand writer to whom he can dictate letters which only require his signature to make them complete. But hitherto the musician has had no such advantage; his crotchets, quavers, and semiquavers have had to be spelt out upon the stave, with the aggravating feeling of ideas flowing faster than the power to give them permanence. The pianist need now no longer despair. After innumerable attempts in past times to construct an apparatus which would print off characters representing any piece played on its keyboard, one has at last been devised which is successful. Its outward form is that of an ordinary cottage pianoforte, but hidden underneath the keys is a cylinder covered with paper. Upon this paper, certain little nibs attached to the under-side of the keys make their mark, after being supplied by mechanical means with suitable ink. This transcribed harmony can afterwards be readily translated into the ordinary musical notation, a task which is said to be sufficiently simple to be undertaken by a person of ordinary intelligence.

Certain telephonic experiments at Havre have proved so promising in their results, that it has been proposed to establish a regular system between that city and the various vessels at anchor in the roads. For this purpose a pontoon structure, which will form the floating terminus of this curious system of maritime communication, will be placed at some distance from the land, and neighbouring vessels will send their messages to it. There are many places on our own coasts where a similar arrangement would be of immense service.

Fireproof paper is being made from a mixture of vegetable fibre, asbestos, borax, and alum, in certain definite proportions; while an ink, also indestructible by fire, for writing upon it, is of the usual constituents, with the addition of graphite. Another novelty from the paper-mills is a luminous and waterproof cardboard, presumably intended for night advertising. The luminosity is produced by the same means as that in Balmain's luminous paint; and the cardboard owes its waterproof quality to the employment in its manufacture of bichromate of potash and gelatine. These two agents when combined become insoluble after exposure to light. With such a self-illuminating substance, there is now no reason why the names of streets and the num-

bers of houses should not be as distinct by night as by day. We observe that the Town Council of Edinburgh have resolved to make an experiment in this direction with a number of streets within the city, in order to ascertain practically what benefits may be derived after dark by street names and house numbers being rendered luminous.

It may be mentioned also that the fire-resisting properties of asbestos may be communicated to ordinary paint. Paint, mixed with asbestos liquid, is, we understand, largely used in America for several purposes, such as coating wood exposed to heat. Three coats will render wood fire-proof, and it is found especially serviceable in hot climates, where wooden houses are general, to serve as a preventative against fire and as a non-conductor to keep the house cool.

M. Lacroix, a Paris chemist, has introduced a new form of pencil, which will prove useful to those engaged in painting on glass or china. Resembling the ordinary cedar pencil in outward appearance, the lead is represented by a coloured mixture of a vitrifiable nature. By drawing on roughened glass or upon unglazed porcelain with this crayon, the material can afterwards be exposed to the heat of a muffle or crucible, with the result that the lines of colour are burnt in and rendered permanent.

The *New York Herald* correspondent of the party who went in search of the crew of the ill-fated *Jeanette* has made some interesting notes relative to the inhabitants of Northern Siberia. Among other items, he mentions that they have wonderfully beautiful teeth, even old men of sixty and seventy years possessing natural sets of pearly whiteness. Indeed, they are altogether free from the dental suffering and decay which seem inseparable from high civilisation. He attributes this immunity from a very distressing form of ailment principally to the simple food which these people indulge in, particularly the fermented sour-milk, which is such a powerful anti-scorbutic; and also to the curious practice which prevails among them of chewing after every meal the resin from a species of fir-tree, for the purpose of clearing their teeth from adherent particles of food.

We hear so much about the transmission of energy by electrical means, that we are apt to lose sight of the fact that other natural forces can be employed in a like manner. The energy of the hydraulic ram we well know can be transmitted by piping made specially to withstand the pressure of the water, but hitherto air has not been so much used as it might be for such a purpose. In Paris, however, a system of transmitting energy by means of air is about to be tried, and as the plan seems to be a promising one, we shall look forward with interest to its development.

With respect to our recent remarks regarding the unsatisfactory official reports on the artificial hay-drying machine trials at Reading, Mr Streeter, of Sackville Place Farm, Buxted, Kent, who has been using Gibb's exhaust-fan, has kindly given us some particulars of his experience. On one day the hay from a field of twelve acres was carried, carted, and stacked, the rain being so incessant that the men employed were all wet through. The temperature of the resulting stack after a short time rose to one hundred and eighty

degrees; the fan was then set to work and quickly reduced it to eighty degrees. This rise, and reduction of temperature by the fan, went on for three weeks, when the hay was dry and in first-rate condition. A field of clover and two or three stacks of oats were treated in the same way, which under ordinary conditions would have been quite spoiled. Mr Strecker speaks very highly of the action of the little machine, the cost of which is only twelve pounds.

Professor Graham Bell, the father of Telephony, lately read a paper before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, on the electrical experiments which were made with a view to discover the whereabouts of the bullet in President Garfield's body. He pointed out that the induction balance, in conjunction with a telephone, would indicate by a peculiar spluttering sound the presence of a leaden bullet five inches away from it. In the case of the wounded President, this peculiar noise became evident when the instrument passed over a particular region; but, curiously enough, this did not indicate the position of the assassin's bullet, but was produced by a steel spring in the mattress under the patient's bed. The apparatus has been much improved, and now Professor Bell is of opinion that the exact position of a bullet in any part of the human body can be noted without the least difficulty.

Sir John Lubbock, whose industry is scarcely excelled by the bees he studies so carefully, has submitted to the Linnæan Society some further observations referring to those insects. These observations relate more especially to their appreciation of sound, with a view to determine whether there is any real value in the popular idea that bees are influenced when swarming by the sound of clanging kettles, &c. Since the time of Aristotle, this notion has prevailed, and although experienced apiarists have little faith in it, Sir John Lubbock, without committing himself to any decided opinion, believes that the insects may hear overtones of sounds which are beyond our range of hearing. In his experiments, he trained bees to come for honey to a musical-box which was kept going for several hours a day for a fortnight. It was placed during the time on a lawn close to a window; afterwards it was removed to the house, and, while still playing, was placed out of sight, although only a few yards from where it formerly stood. The bees failed to find it; but they readily came to it for the honey, when shown to them; proving that so far as regards sounds audible to us, they exhibit little appreciation of them.

Some years ago, Mr Douglas Galton, F.R.S., contrived a whistle the note of which could be altered at will until a pitch was reached quite inaudible by any human ear. But that a sound really existed was proved by the effect on a sensitive flame, whenever this apparently dumb whistle was blown in its vicinity. By this instrument it might be possible to determine whether Sir John Lubbock's surmise regarding the bees' appreciation of overtones is correct. It is just possible that there may not be sounds pervading all nature, which, though inaudible to mankind, delight the more humble denizens of the globe.

A new signalling experiment has been made

in Paris by M. Mangin, a member of the Académie d'Aérostation. He filled a small balloon with pure hydrogen, which is lighter, and therefore has greater ascending powers than ordinary coal-gas, and hung in its centre, in the midst of the gas, a Swan incandescent lamp. The balloon, which was made of a translucent material, was well illuminated, and could be seen from some distance. Moreover, by interrupting the current in connection with the lamp, the Morse alphabet could be easily spelt out in the form of long and short flashes. This experiment is, we fancy, more remarkable for its ingenuity than for its practical value. The double wire for carrying and returning the current must be of a certain thickness, and its weight would of course limit the altitude of the machine.

A recent Report by M. Girard, director of the municipal laboratory of Paris, shows that the art of adulteration is carried on there with great skill—indeed we may look upon it as a fine art and a scientific pursuit combined. Currant jelly, without a particle of currant juice in it, is manufactured from a kind of sea-weed, coloured with fuchsine, and flavoured with a mixture of acetic ether, tartaric and other acids. Other favourite compounds supposed to be produced from natural fruits, have their flavours made up from still more doubtful chemical combinations. Flour is largely adulterated with mineral agents, sometimes of a poisonous nature, plaster of Paris and sulphate of baryta being common; and the staff of life itself when thus injured is often insufficiently baked, so that its weight may be increased.

According to the *Vienno Agricultural Gazette*, it has recently been discovered that meerschmann pipes of excellent quality, susceptible of the highest polish, and even more readily colourable than the genuine *spruma di mare*, may be made of potatoes. The familiar tuber, it seems, is well qualified to compete with the substance known to commerce as 'meerschmann clay.' Its latent virtues in this direction are developed by the following treatment. Having been carefully peeled, and its 'eyes' extracted, the potato is boiled uninterruptedly for thirty-six hours in a mixture of sulphuric acid and water, after which it must be squeezed in a press until every drop of natural or acquired moisture is extracted from it. The residuum of this simple process is a hard block of delicate creamy white hue, every whit as suitable for the manufacture of ornamental and artistically executed pipe-heads as the finest clay. The potato, moreover, dealt with in the manner above described, promises to prove a formidable rival to the elephant's tusk. As potatoes are plentiful all over the world, and are likely to remain so, whilst elephants are, comparatively speaking, rarities, mankind at large may be fairly congratulated upon the discovery of a substitute for ivory which can be produced in unlimited quantities and at an almost nominal cost, taking into consideration the difference of price between a pound of potatoes and a pound of elephant's tusk.

From official returns, it appears that in India, during 1881, no fewer than 18,670 human beings were killed by snakes, and 2759 by 'wild animals'; whilst 43,609 head of cattle were in like manner destroyed. As a set-off to this terrible loss, we learn that 254,968 snakes and 15,274 'wild

animals' were destroyed, and upwards of ten thousand pounds paid by the Indian government for their destruction. In a country such as India, where deadly snakes abound, and where the natives are in the habit of going with bare feet and limbs, the annual sacrifice of human life must continue to be more or less appalling.

A method of curing herring and other kinds of fish has been introduced by Mr George Leach, of Hull. Mr Leach's plan consists in the application of machinery to the curing of fish, and particularly to the 'bloating' of herrings, in place of the slow and otherwise unsatisfactory processes by manual labour. The mechanism employed is contained in three towers or chambers, rising to a height of twenty-four feet, through which the fish, either spitted or placed back downward on wirework grills, are passed, and undergo successively the process of drying, smoking, and cooling. Mr Leach estimates that such an establishment would be able to bloat seventy-one barrels, or forty-seven thousand herrings, or cure six and a half tons, or eighteen thousand six hundred finnan haddocks, every ten hours; and that two hundred and fifteen thousand sprats, carried on creeper nets, instead of spits or grills, could be dealt with in the same time; also, that by his system a barrel of herring—equal to six hundred fish—can be bloated at a cost of sixpence, as against one shilling and ninepence, the present cost.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

A WONDERFUL TIMBER REGION.

QUOTING from *The Colonies and India*, we learn that in the Far West, in a lovely country which once belonged to England, but was afterwards ceded to the United States, there grows the finest body of timber in the world. Fir and pine, and oak and cedar, of unsurpassed quality and practically unlimited in quantity, clothe the mountains, overhang the rivers, and shadow the plains of the Puget Sound district in Washington Territory. On a moderate estimate it is calculated that this region will yield the enormous and unimaginable quantity of one hundred and sixty thousand million feet of valuable timber. The trees attain a remarkable development both of height and beauty. The yellow fir is frequently found growing to a height of two hundred and fifty feet; the white cedar to one hundred feet, with a girth of over sixty feet; the white oak to seventy feet in height; whilst ordinary sized specimens of the sugar-pine yield from six to eight thousand feet of lumber each. For long after its discovery, this marvellous store of timber remained undisturbed, its primeval quietness unbroken by the sound of the woodman's axe. But in 1851 a saw-mill was built on Puget Sound, and thenceforward continually increasing inroads were made upon the forest, until to-day no fewer than fifteen such mills are at work upon it. The largest of these has a cutting capacity of two hundred thousand feet per diem. During the year 1881 the export of lumber from Puget Sound amounted to nearly one hundred and seventy-four million one hundred and seventy-six thousand seven hundred feet, valued at nearly two million dollars; and

it is calculated that since the establishment of the first saw-mill about two thousand five hundred million feet have been cut. Yet in spite of this great tax upon them, we are told that the forest remains for the most part in virgin condition, except for a short distance from the banks of the streams and estuaries.

AN AMERICAN CONFIDENCE TRICK.

Much has been said and written about the simplicity on land of poor Jack-tar. Now, let me relate a true story, in which I, second-mate of the *Ocean Queen*—we will say—played a conspicuous part.

We had had a tough passage from the Cape, got stranded, and hove-to once or twice; then came heavy seas and high winds that bore us out of our course; hence all hands were glad enough when we got into port, New York City. It was the first time I had set foot in Yankeeland, so perhaps it is a bit excusable if my first impression was a curious and lasting one. The boatswain—a very good fellow, open-hearted as any of his kind—and myself were walking down one of the principal thoroughfares of the city, when our glances at one and the same time alighted upon a kid glove lying in the street. One of us—I forget which—picked it up, and with an ejaculation—from both—discovered a lady's gold ring set with stones fixed in one of the fingers. In the flush of astonishment at our good luck, before even we had decided upon what to do, a gentleman tapped us on the shoulder and in a few words informed us that he had been an eye-witness of the discovery, and could, if we so desired, give us information respecting its value and best method of its most profitable disposal, he having been, he said, 'at one time in the trade.'

We listened, and were willing to consent to the new-comer's taking one-third the profit in exchange for the 'valuable information.' Hereupon, the latter, stating as his reason his having business that called him up-country that very day, unanimously proposed to sacrifice his share for, 'Say, five pounds down; an' I guess it's no bad bargain ye're makin';' he added with all good temper and much good-will; then commencing to give evidence of his knowledge and past experience 'in the trade,' by drawing attention to the eighteen carat gold, the purity of the 'first-water' stones, &c.

Five pounds down! We were flush of coin, and inclined to be more than generous. My mate was ready at once to agree to the arrangement; but for myself I felt a sudden uneasiness, a faint sort of suspicion, and when called upon for my consent, expressed my disinclination. The boatswain grew somewhat warm; but I was determined and obdurate. I would not assent. Rather would I have nothing whatever to do with it, I said. Very well, then; he would. The bargain was struck. The money passed hands. The stranger smilingly bade us good-day, wishing us many pleasant voyages and many more such strokes of luck, and was gone; leaving my mate and self, the former minus five pounds of his hard earnings, but in possession of an old kid glove, a piece of Brummagem jewellery, worth—as he afterwards learnt to his sad experience—sixpence, and a mind full to distraction of 'valuable information!'

A NEW TORPEDO-BOAT.

The latest engine of torpedo-warfare, and one that is not unlikely to entirely supersede our English torpedo-boats, is Nordenfeldt's new submarine boat, which was recently launched at Harlswick in Sweden. This terrible adjunct of our modern destructive warfare is fitted with engines indicating one hundred horse-power, and will, it is said, easily attain a speed of fifteen miles an hour above, and thirteen miles below, the surface of the water. The vessel is sunk to the required depth by the admission of water into tanks; but it is only intended to be submerged to the depth of a foot or so when about to attack an enemy's ship. When the work of destruction is complete, the boat re-emerges from the water by the operation of special automatic machinery. The hull itself, which is constructed of Swedish steel, of a minimum thickness of half an inch, is of the cigar pattern, and is only with difficulty visible even when floating on the surface. The length is sixty-four feet, and the diameter about eight, the engine-room being seven and a half feet in height; and the gross weight of the whole vessel when fully manned and equipped is sixty tons. A sort of glass bell-shaped helmet rises from the centre of the boat, and into this the captain puts his head when under water, thus commanding an all-round view and enabling him to direct the general movements of the craft. In case of accidents, the hull is divided into water-tight compartments; and extra pumping-machinery is provided, to be used in the event of any portion of the automatic apparatus failing to raise the vessel to the surface. The crew consists of three men, and the armament of four torpedoes, two being of the 'fish' pattern, and two of the ordinary spar or polo species. Against such an insidious foe as this Nordenfeldt boat, it is obvious that the ordinary wire-netting for the defence of ironclads from the hitherto employed torpedo-boats, will be useless; and unless further means of defence are now provided, warfare with our present huge vessels promises more than ever to become a thing of the past.

OIL ON THE WATER.

On the 4th of December, Captain Brice, one of the inspectors of the Board of Trade, was in Aberdeen, watching experiments for the purpose of rendering the passage of vessels over the bar safe in stormy weather, by pumping oil upon the water. A heavy south-westerly gale was blowing. Just before the experiments commenced, the ship *Canoid* of Peterhead had a narrow escape, while making for the harbour entrance. Since experiments were first made, some alterations have been effected in the pipes, adding greatly to the efficiency of the system. Seal-oil was used. After the pumps had been

at work twenty minutes, the crested waves, which were dashing with great fury against the piers, became greatly assuaged, and the entrance was rendered safe. The experiments were considered successful.

NEW GUARD-RAIL FOR FISHING-BOATS AND OTHER VESSELS.

There can be no doubt that the low gunwales of our fishing-boats, whilst affording the greatest facilities for working their nets, are at the same time a fruitful source of danger in stormy weather. It has lately been sought to remedy this defect by various devices, the great points to be aimed at being the construction of a movable guard-rail of sufficient height and strength to afford protection, and yet of such a character as to admit of being raised and lowered, in whole or in part, with ease and rapidity. A new guard-rail, with this object, has been designed by Mr John Gunn, of Golspie. The rail is hinged and folding, and lies in a groove along the gunwale when not in actual use, and is then so entirely out of the way as not in the slightest degree to embarrass the working of the nets. The rail may be used in sections. It consists of a row of standards about two feet in height and about two feet apart, with a continuous top-rail. The cost of fitting a first-class boat—say of forty feet keel—with the safety-rail will, we understand, be from ten to twelve pounds.

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